THE

ASSEMBLY'S MISSIONARY MAGAZINE;

OR

EVANGELICAL INTELLIGENCER.

VOL. I. JULY, 1805. No. VII.

MODERN MISSIONARY SOCIETIES.—CONTINUED.

THE HAMPSHIRE MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

THIS society is composed of all the Congregational and Presbyterian ministers in the county of Hampshire, state of Massachusetts; of one delegate from each church of the Congregational and Presbyterian denominations in the county; and of all persons who have subscribed and added to the funds of the society as required by the constitution. The society meet annually at Northampton, at which time the officers are elected, the reports of the trustees examined, and all other necessary business transacted. All the active and important concerns of the institution are managed by a board of twelve trustees.

In 1802 four Missionaries were appointed by the trustees of this society; two were sent to the counties of Montgomery, Herkemer, and Oneida, in the state of New-York, to be employed on the north side of Mohawk river, and two went to the new settlements in the district of Maine. In general they were gladly received, kindly treated, and their services gratefully acknowledged. People crouded to attend lectures and conferences, and to hear the word of life, and they eagerly solicited that the Missionaries would return, or that others might be sent to them. These Missionaries distributed several hundred volumes of books which the trustees had purchased for the purpose.

The next year, in prosecution of their work, the trustees appointed four other Missionaries. Two of them were employed in the counties of Herkemer, Oneida, Onondago, and Chenango, in New-York, and the others in the district of Maine. A very liberal appropriation for the purchase of books was made, and the books freely distributed throughout that portion of the country in which the Missionaries travelled. Distinguished success appeared to follow their labours. They visited schools; catechised children; discoursed and held conferences with the people on religious subjects; and, as occasion presented, administered baptism and the Lord's supper. They formed three new churches, one in the state of New-York, and two in the district of Maine; and the scattered inhabitants generally manifested great eagerness to attend their ministrations. In many places where religion was wholly neglected, and the sabbath profaned, these Missionaries induced the people to meet regularly on that day, and, if they had no preaching, to read, pray, and sing God's praises. They now take great pains to go to meeting, and often travel many miles over bad roads to hear the word of life.

In 1804 four Missionaries were again employed. Two of them went to the district of Maine, and the others were directed principally to the counties of Chenango and Onondago in the state of New-York. The report of the trustees respecting the success of this Mission has not yet been published. This year a greater number of books than heretofore was procured and distributed, and the funds of the society are constantly increasing. As soon as these funds will admit, and the means can be obtained to encourage the hope of success, this society will employ Missionaries to the Indian nations. Already have they contributed liberally in educating two Indian youths, in the hopeful prospect of their being usefully employed, at a future day, in teaching christianity to their heathen brethren.

BIOGRAPHY.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE REVEREND DR. JAMES SPROAT, TAKEN FROM THE SERMON PREACHED AT HIS FUNERAL BY DR. GREEN.

At the college of Yale, in the state of Connecticut, he early received a liberal education. While he was pursuing his academical studies, he met with that change in his temper and views, which determined him to devote his life to the ministry of the gospel, and which, we doubt not, has prepared him for the exercises and enjoyments of the heavenly state.

Dr. Sproat was first ordained a minister of the gospel at Guilford in Connecticut. During the revival of religion in this country, between forty and fifty years ago, he was abundant in labours, distinguished in his zeal, highly popular, and greatly blessed. From Guilford, the call of this church* brought him to this city, and gave us the advantages of his piety and fidelity in his Master's cause. Between his first congregation and his second, his life as a minister, was almost equally divided. Nearly the exact space of twenty-five years was spent in each.

He used often to tell me in his natural temper he was easily susceptible of passion. If it was so, it is certain that, like the sage of antiquity,† *he was remarkable for his victory over it*, and for those virtues which are its opposites. Patience, moderation, indulgence, and forbearance were leading features in his general character. Meekness and affection distinguished him highly. Not only in the near relations of husband, father and master, did they render him most dear and exemplary; but in all his intercourse with the world they shone out in the mildest and most amiable light. His candour, charity and tenderness, appeared on all occasions, and gained him in a peculiar degree, the respect and affection of almost all descriptions of persons. He was free from all disguise. He was "an Israelite indeed in whom there was no guile." You saw, at once, the man you would always see. Such a man was peculiarly formed for lasting friendship and unreserved confidence. They could scarcely be avoided by one who was often with him. Between him and myself, therefore, they subsisted in a manner which fills me with mournful pleasure to recollect, and the loss of which I most sensibly realise and deplore. In a

* The second Presbyterian church in the city of Philadelphia.

† Socrates.

collegiate charge of nearly seven years not one cold, or distant, or formal word, ever passed between us; not the slightest alienation interrupted our harmony. On all occasions he treated me like a father, and like a father I can truly say, I loved and honoured him. His usual appellation, in addresing me was *my son:*— And had I been his son by the ties of nature, as well as in the bonds of the gospel, he could scarcely have treated me with more affection, or more sincerely regarded my interest as his own. These declarations are the tribute of justice, of duty, and of gratitude, which I owe to his memory. I owe it indeed, a thousand times more than this—a thousand recollections of kindness fill my mind and affect my heart while I am speaking of him. I can never forget them;—but I must now forbear to speak farther of them.

In scholastic attainments he was a good proficient. Of those which are denominated the learned languages he was a considerable master. He loved all the pursuits and interests of science; and I have heard him lament, that his urgent calls to active service in early life left him so little time to become accurate in some of the departments of literature.

In the study of divinity he had made a progress which was truly great and enviable. It was his delight and he pursued it incessantly. A man has seldom been seen who had a more complete knowledge or a more familiar acquaintance with the holy scriptures. His great readiness in quoting and applying them in a pertinent manner, in his public addresses, you have all observed, and many of you, I trust, will remember, as the means of your spiritual edification. He had made deep researches into systematic, casuistic, and polemic divinity. On these subjects he read much in some of the last years of his life. " My own sentiments, (said he) in regard to the essentials of religion, I believe are fixed. But I find much entertainment, and, I think, some advantage in reading books of this description."

In his discourses from the pulpit he loved to dwell on the fundamental and peculiar doctrines of the gospel, which he regarded as a system of pure grace and mercy, abasing the sinner to the dust, and exalting God in the highest. When the train of his address led him to speak on the experimental part of religion, he was excellent and edifying in a singular degree. " He shunned not to declare the whole counsel of God," entreating, warning, and persuading souls in the most serious, plain, affectionate, and pressing manner to " flee from the wrath to come." His public prayers were remarkable for a vein of piety and fervour seldom equalled.

He had a certain copiousness of expression, and engagedness of manner in this divine service, which could arise from no other source than the familiar intercourse of his own soul with heaven.

In his personal religion he was truly eminent. His life and example exhibited a most amiable view of the influence and efficacy of the gospel principles on the human heart and character. Unfeigned humility, that ornament of every other grace, had become a habit of his soul, and appeared in all his deportment. Having studied long and made great proficiency in the school of Christ, he had learned the hard lesson of thinking in a very lowly manner of himself. His charity for others was uncommonly extensive. It led him to hope the best where there was any probability on which hope could be founded. His faith was built on the sure foundations of the gospel, and it supported his soul in the most trying hour. In some of his last moments he said, "All my expectations for eternity rest on the infinite grace of God, abounding through the finished righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ." He was a pattern of patience and resignation. The painful infirmities of age, under which he laboured for a considerable time before his death, he bore with a cheerful fortitude. Since the twenty-third day of August last, he had been looking for death, and ripening for it with uncommon speed. On that day he completed half a century of years in the character of an ordained minister of the gospel; and thence forward, to the time of his death, the larger portion of his waking hours were spent in the immediate acts of devotion, or of devout meditations and aspirations of soul.* He endured the severe distress which was inflicted on his family without the lest repining.† At the funeral of a dear son he might with peculiar propriety use the language, for he eminently possessed the spirit, of Job.‡

* This is confirmed not only by the observation and testimony of those who were most about him, but by what appears in his own diary. This diary exhibits one of the most instructing views of the exercises and temper of a christian, especially when under affliction, that perhaps has ever been seen. A portion of this diary follows the present sketch of his life.

† His eldest son with his wife, and his youngest daughter, died within the space of a month. The doctor himself, and Mrs. Sproat, were added to the number in less than a month afterwards.

‡ Enfeebled and trembling with age, the Dr. followed the corpse of his son to the grave, and after it was deposited, leaning on his staff, he pronounced only these words, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord." Amen!

His death was easy, and he was rational to the last. A short time before he expired, and after he had lost the power of speech, being asked if he felt the supports of religion, he answered by the signal of lifting up his hand and his eyes to heaven.

The respect which was shown to his remains, at a time which precluded it in almost every other instance, was a proof of the high esteem in which he was held.* It was a proof also, that there are circumstances in which acknowledged and distinguished piety will secure that which wealth cannot purchase, nor worldly influence command. To the generous Africans who carried him to his grave, I here make a return of public thanks. Thus lived, and thus has died, the late worthy pastor of this church. His life was filled up with piety and fidelity, and the last scene of it was closed with peculiar honour and dignity. Having never sullied the profession which he made, or the character which he bore, he retired from the world like a venerable champion of the gospel of Christ. One of his brethren, considerably advanced in life himself, writing to me on the subject of his death, says, " I sincerely mourn with you and the churches the death of our colleague. But he had lived to a good old age.† He had lived a life of usefulness and reputation, and, what was a rich blessing, he had not out-lived his usefulness. Oh, let us double our diligence and work while our day lasts." He died October 18th, 1793.

* During the late distressing scenes which were witnessed in this city the almost universal mode of conveying a corpse to the grave was in a hearse or a cart; and the attendants consisted only of the person who drove the carriage, the grave digger, or a negro hired for the purpose, and, in a few instances, two or three mourning friends. But in the case of Dr. Sproat, there was a procession, and bearers of the dead;—which, as it was more striking to the beholders, in the circumstances in which it happened, than the most splendid funeral that perhaps the city ever produced, so it was a much stronger proof of the affection which was felt for the deceased, than the greatest parade, in ordinary times, can possibly be. The pious people who had met at the church for prayer, formed a procession of about fifty persons, and some religious negroes voluntarily offered themselves to carry the bier.

† Dr. Sproat entered on his 72d year in April, 1793. He was born at Scituate, in the state of Massachusetts, April 11th, 1722, O. S.

Extracts from the diary of the late Rev. Dr. James Sproat.

It is intended by these extracts to exhibit the state of mind and habits of life of this excellent man, both at ordinary times and in a season of the deepest calamity and distress—the pestilence in Philadelphia in the year 1793. With this view, a small portion of his diary, during a few months immediately previous to the Yellow Fever, will be inserted in the present number of the Magazine. In the next number we shall give more copious and interesting extracts from what he wrote while that awful disease was raging, which hurried into eternity many of his friends and his flock, and which made him a mourner over three of his own family, and which even eventually numbered him among its victims.

June 4th, 1793. I pray the Lord for his gracious presence, as I expect to keep house all the day. After prayer I read Dickinson's Letters upon Justification, comparing them with what has been written on the same subject by Mr. Murray and Dr. Edwards. I studied pretty diligently this day; except that I was interrupted by copying some minutes of the corporation of the widow's fund for Dr. Ewing. I seemed to have my attention this day pretty much gained to the glorious plan of gospel grace, reigning through righteousness; and I had some glimmerings of the beauty and glory of it, that seemed in some measure to attract my heart, which, if it was not the vilest among the human species, methinks would be ravished with the view.

June 5th. After prayer I wrote a little. I expect to keep house all day, and I pray for God's presence in study. Company called and spent a little while with us. I studied most of the day pretty diligently, and a little in the evening. I find by experience that my nature must be exceedingly corrupt, that notwithstanding the clear speculative views I have of the gospel plan of salvation by Jesus Christ, there is little effect upon my heart. O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death! God be merciful to me a sinner.

June 6th. The Lord be with me and assist me in study. I studied most of this day very diligently—seemed to have some inward comfort, in applying to my own soul some of the rules of trial in Mr. Dickinson's Letters. Search me, O Lord, and try me, and see if iniquity be indulged in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

Saturday, June 8th. Attended, as usual, the forms of religious worship. Oh that I may not rest in them, for verily I find all my righteousnesses are as filthy rags, not fit to make any part of a

garment to appear before God in. O Lord! cover my soul with the spotless robes of the righteousness of thine immaculate Son, that the shame of my nakedness appear not. Mrs. Sproat is urging me to ride out a little way, which I believe I shall comply with. May the Lord preserve us going out and coming in. I pray the Lord to prepare me for the holy sabbath.

Lord's day, June 9th. The weather very warm. I preached at Campingtown in the morning, and finished my sermons from the words, "Compel them to come in." There was a considerable congregation for that place, and there appeared to be an unusual attention. May the Lord follow it with his blessing. In the afternoon I preached from, or rather expounded, the whole of the 133d Psalm, "How good is it for brethren to dwell together in unity," &c. The Lord was very kind to me this day, supported me under infirmities, and in the afternoon, though I began under great weakness, before I finished he seemed to increase my strength. Blessed be his name.

June 10th. Very warm still. Rode out to take a little fresh air. Laid down a little while; then rose and read with attention Dickinson's Letters upon the Evidences of Christianity, which I think are written with great judgment and precision. Wrote a little.

June 11th. After attending the usual duties of religious worship, I was occupied with company for some time; then visited Mrs. A—— in child-bed: discoursed with her, prayed and gave thanks to God. She seemed tender and attentive. I then called to see Mrs. S—— whom I had visited before. She is better, but still very weak. Had some discourse with her on religious subjects. The heat almost overcame me. After dinner laid down an hour. Rose and read Dickinson's Letters. Hope I have found some pleasure in the duties of meditation and religious worship. Blessed be God for it. This day the public prints state that the thermometer is at 94°.

June 12th. I pray to have the fear of God before my eyes all the day, and the love of God in my heart. I abode at home all day; studied considerably; attempted to lift up my heart to God. Find daily more and more my absolute dependence on the sovereign grace of God, to enable me to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

June 14th. After prayer Mrs. Sproat and I rode about 7 or 8 miles out and in; could not but admire the wisdom and goodness of providence in the productions of the earth, and in the health and strength of the inhabitants of both sexes whom I saw

employed with cheerfulness in their labours. The hay is in abundance, now cutting down and gathering in. The barley harvest is begun; the grain exceeding good. Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness to the children of men! In the afternoon, endeavoured to prepare for the religious society. Had Dr. R. and lady and some others to tea. Attended society and preached from 1 Peter iv. 19. "Let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to him in well doing," &c. Had not so much freedom as I expected; probably my thoughts had been too much diverted by company at tea. Oh how careful should I be that my mind be solemn and spiritual when I attempt any thing for the great God! May the Lord forgive me, and follow with his blessing what I have delivered in weakness, and raise it in power.

Saturday, June 22nd. I seemed yesterday to have some such views of the wisdom, power, goodness, and love, of the eternally blessed and glorious God, manifested in saving sinners by Jesus Christ, as seemed to afford me some pleasing sensations. Oh that my whole heart and soul, with all their powers and affections, may acquiesce in the glorious plan, and all remaining opposition be subdued by the power of gracious influence! After prayer wrote a little. I pray God to be with me this day, and to prepare my heart, and give me strength for the holy duties of to-morrow.

Lord's day, June 23d. Gave an exposition upon the epistle directed to the church in Philadelphia, in the third chapter of the Revelations, with some practical reflections: I seemed to be favoured with some freedom; blessed be God. In the afternoon preached from John i. 45. "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets did write." I have abundant reason to admire and adore the goodness and mercy of God in affording me so much strength, and carrying me through my public services, in my declining state of life. Oh that I may be enabled to do all for God, with an eye to his glory, and willingly spend my little remaining strength in his service; and O that I may be so happy as to be successful.

June 25th. After prayer I wrote a little. Then read Dr. Sewal upon the love of God, and another author upon the internal evidences of christianity. Kept house all day, and studied pretty diligently. Had a little more pain than usual with my customary complaint. May the Lord give me the sanctified improvement of it. I seemed to have groanings in prayer, but not such access to God as my soul desires.

[*To be continued.*]

RELIGIOUS AND MORAL DISCUSSIONS.

HOLINESS AND VIRTUE.

Mr. Editor,

In every treatise or discourse, whether on matters of science or art, of politics or religion, it is reasonable to expect, that the precise sense and import of the terms which are used, especially if they be important and at the same time conceived by some to be synonymous, be distinctly explained; at least, that, by some means or other, the ideas we mean to convey by them be made clear and unquestionable. The neglect of this precaution, from whatever motive or cause it may have arisen, has occasioned not a little confusion in our ideas and not a few errors in practice. The only branch of knowledge in which this requisite has been duly attended to, is the mathematics; and to this precaution it is, that we are indebted for much of the clearness and certainty of its demonstrations. But why should it be so generally waved in other branches, and those of equal, and even of much greater importance? This, I conceive, is in no small degree reprehensible. Its evil consequences are many, and no where are they more frequently apparent than in the all-interesting concerns of religion. Did they proceed no farther than the perplexities, in the way of disputation, which have so often resulted from it, it might the more easily be connived at; but when it is observed to induce practical misapprehensions in a matter of so high importance to human felicity, it ought not to be passed over without serious animadversion.

An instance of this kind is very remarkable in the frequent indiscriminate use of the term Virtue; in the use of it, I mean, as synonymous with Holiness; or in the use of the former, as a substitute to the latter, when the latter would be much more pertinent, and indeed more necessary, to a just and distinct information on the subject. These terms are not properly, at least in point of their entire respective import, synonymous; nor, in consistency with just conceptions of divine truth, ought they to be used as such. Holiness, it is true, in its received acceptation, implies whatever is imported in Virtue. But Virtue, in its utmost allowed comprehension, does not include in it that which is most essential and distinguishing in Holiness. The former, in order to its conveyance of an equivalent meaning, requires the aid of some epithet, expressly adjoined, which shall designate a property peculiar to

the latter; a property of which, independently on such adjunction, the former is wholly destitute: such as holy virtue, spiritual virtue, christian or evangelical virtue.

In respect to its etymology: it is derived from the Latin word *Virtus*, which properly signifies fortitude, courage, strength, and the like. In the Greek language, it is Δυναμις, from Δυναμαι, to be able; or Αρετη, from Αρης, Mars; fortitude, courage, and strength, being with the Greeks as with the Romans, its proper and original signification. In process of time, however, its meaning came to be considerably enlarged, so as to include in it, all the good emotions of the human heart, and all good moral actions which refer to our fellow-men or to human society: that is, all good emotions which may be felt, and all good actions which may be performed, independently on the influence or co-operation of religious principles strictly so called. This extension of its meaning, I believe, has been universally agreed to. But to use it as a substitute to that which involves the informing spirit, and the prompting influence of the principle just mentioned, is doubtless very objectionable. It is well known, how much, in this their dark degenerate state, mankind are disposed to deceive themselves, and to be deceived, on the subjects of religion; how apt they are to imbibe and to entertain wrong notions of its nature and its characters; and how incorrect, in consequence, they are liable to be in the judgments which they form of themselves in a religious view. Now, can any thing more aptly, say rather, unavoidably, tend to this error, than the designation of real religion by a term which does not involve it in its signification? a term, which, when taken in its utmost allowable extension, is entirely unmeaning as to that, in which true religion most essentially consists?. When religion is so designated, the reader or the hearer is led to suppose that it really includes no more than what is properly signified by the term.

It is however, and that without any breach of charity, to be feared, that in some instances, at least, the term Virtue is, even in the view of this its limited implication, used in preference; and so used where Holiness, or some other word or expression of equal meaning, ought in propriety to occupy its place. Holiness is generally known to have an implication which is rather ungrateful to the natural unregenerated heart of man. This is the case even where its implication is little understood, and where but little pains have been taken to investigate it. In consequence, the word is become unfashionable; and, to some, its very sound is even disgusting. But Virtue, on the other hand, is in all ears, and almost on all occasions, an agreeable sound. It is scarcely ever

obnoxious to the like objections with the other. And although, in some cases, its claims are higher than men are generally willing in practice to accede to, yet they are not so high (as they console themselves) but that, when circumstances suit, and they are in the humour of it, they may meet them reputably enough; and meet them without the association, or the aid of those spiritual qualities, endowments, or influences, on which the pretenders to a more sublime and refined sanctity lay so much stress. Under this view, Virtue, or at least, the name of it, is, in the common estimation, by far the most eligible; and it is not to be wondered at, that it should have become the most fashionable even amongst too many of those who call themselves Christians, as well as amongst professed infidels, in this so highly improved and polished age.

But how strong, in consequence, is the temptation held out to the writer, who wishes to stand well in the opinion of fashionable society, and even to the christian preacher, to overlook, or to wave in expression, the most distinguishing and interesting considerations of religious truth, or to sacrifice its purity, or some most important part of its claims, to the good graces of mankind! It is affecting to observe, how much, by this means, multitudes even of those who are more willing to be instructed in matters of everlasting moment, are confused and misled, where they ought to be most distinctly and clearly informed.

The notions of religion which prevailed in the heathen world, with whom the terms answerable to what we call Virtue originated, are well known to have been essentially defective. It is also, at least by many, known, how differently religion is represented as to its nature and properties in the holy scriptures, which alone "are able to make us wise to salvation." It seems, accordingly, to have been a pointed design of the inspired writers to deviate in expression from the teachers of the heathen nations on topics of this kind. The reason is obvious. Those teachers were ignorant, as has been observed, of the nature and properties of true religion, and of what constituted the truth, the excellence, and acceptable character of moral dispositions and actions. It did not enter into their conceptions, that morals, unaccompanied with the spirit of piety, were unsound and spurious. They did not conceive, that a principle of obedience to God, of supreme love to him, of devotedness to him, of confidence in him, and of an ultimate respect to his approbation, and to the honour of his holy name, was essential to the constitution of every good and acceptable action. Of course, the terms, by which they expressed what knowledge they had, being defective

in their customary established acceptation, were inadequate to the conveyance of any proper notion of that, in which the most requisite qualities of such action consisted.

Had the inspired writers, in their explications or descriptions of religion, confined themselves to the terms which those teachers used, they would not have communicated that correct knowledge of divine things which so highly distinguishes their writings; for, in this case, those terms would be understood as implying no more than those heathen instructors, or philosophers as they were called, intended by them.

If therefore we would explain the subjects of religion and morality, so as to convey a true and distinct knowledge of their essential properties to the minds of our fellow-men, it is needful, that we use those terms which shall most properly and fully designate and distinguish them; that shall designate and distinguish them as they are exposed to our view in the word of God, which is perfect truth. In that word, true religion appears to be carefully and generally denoted, not by the term Virtue, but by "Holiness." In that word, to be formed into the spirit and character of religion is denoted by the word "sanctified," or by being "made holy;" and the persons spoken of as such, are called "saints." It implies a separation, or being set apart to sacred use and service, as were the tabernacle, the temple, the priests, the altars, the sacrifices, &c. under the ancient levitical or typical law. It implies a character or disposition of the heart devoted to the fear, love, and service of God. It implies a purification from the defilements of sin, a freedom from its predominant power over the heart and practice, and an endowment of the mind or soul with an habitual principle of spiritual, as opposed to a carnal, sensual, and earthly, life. On the whole, it consists in a conformity to the nature and will of God, by which the man is distinguished from the unrenewed world, and is not actuated by its principles nor governed by its maxims and customs. And this conformity is the result of an entire moral change in the subject, a regeneration, or renovation in the spirit of his mind by the Holy Spirit of God, issuing in a universal habit of Holiness, comprehensive of all the variety of graces, and virtues, if you please, which are exercised in the life of a Christian. According to Galatians v. 22, 23, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Such is the signification, such the general import, of the term Holiness.

Now, may it be supposed, that Virtue, substituted for it, will be understood as involving all those necessary ingredients of true

religion? In speaking therefore with reference to the nature, the constituent properties, and operations of true religion, Holiness is to be considered as its radical and most justly descriptive principle in the heart of man, and as the principle which actuates, or as the character which pervades and tinctures, all its tendencies, emotions, and actions, under whatever forms they present themselves, whether of charity, benevolence, humanity, gentleness, purity, honesty, honour, chastity, or any other forms, which are comprehended in the allowed signification of Virtue.

REVIEW.

THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST:

A Missionary Sermon, preached before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in Philadelphia, May 23d, 1805. By EDWARD D. GRIFFIN, A. M. *one of the Pastors of the first Presbyterian Church in Newark, New-Jersey.*

THIS is the third Missionary Sermon preached before the General Assembly. It does the author much credit, and is well adapted to the interesting occasion for which it was composed. The design of the preacher is, by a suitable exhibition of the kingdom of Jesus Christ in its unspeakable importance, vast extent, and transcendent majesty, to awaken in his auditors a missionary spirit, and to prepare them for an application for pecuniary aid to the Assembly's missionary funds. The execution of the design is admirable. The preacher has given such an interesting, impressive, and sublime view of the kingdom of Jesus as must engage the feelings and affections of every heart that has any love to God and benevolence to man. To justify this remark by quotations, we should have to transcribe a large part of the sermon. We can only present a few detached paragraphs to give an idea of the strength of the author's conceptions, and the glowing colours in which he exhibits them. Speaking in his introduction, of the design of the Deity in creation, he says,

"In order to a right solution of these points, we must conceive an eternal propensity in the fountain of love to overflow, and fill with happiness numberless vessels fitted to receive it. We must conceive an eternal propensity in God to manifest the richness and perfection of his nature to creatures; not for the sake of ostentatious display, but to enrich the universe with the knowledge of his glory, and to lay a foundation for general confidence and delight in him: A state of unproductive repose was

not a condition becoming himself. As the sun exists in his proper and most glorious state when shedding his beams to bless the dependent planets, so God is conceived to exist in his proper and most glorious state when he is benevolently exercising his perfections on the created system, and, so to speak, hangs them around him like an eternal robe of light, to awaken the wonder and joy of creatures. The stupendous object which he contemplated was an immense and beautifully adjusted kingdom of holy and happy creatures, in which he should be acknowledged as the glorious head, and they should take their proper place at his feet; in which he should be felt as the centre of attraction to draw all its parts into union with himself, and as a sun to shed blessed influence upon the whole; and over which, when its prosperity should be completed, he might *rejoice with joy, and rest in his love.*"

The following passage deserves an attentive perusal.

" As this world was wholly intended for the scene of redemption, *all the good which it contains* belongs to the plan of grace that was laid in Christ. His kingdom comprises every valuable object which God proposed to himself in creating, preserving, and governing the world,—the whole amount of his glory upon earth, and the immortal blessedness of millions of men. It is the only cause on earth that is worth an anxious thought. It is the only interest which God pursues or values, and the only object worthy of the attention of men. For this sole object were they created, and placed in this world, with social affections adapted to their present state, with employments appointed for the preservation of their lives. No one interest distinct from the kingdom of Christ are they required to pursue. No laws but those which appertain to this kingdom, and which of course respect only the concerns of it, were ever enacted by heaven to direct their conduct. Their secular employments, their social duties, are enjoined only as subordinate to the interest of this kingdom. Their private and social propensities they are not indeed required to extinguish; but with these about them, to march with a strong and steady step directly towards this great object, with their eye filled with its magnitude, and with hearts glowing with desires for its promotion. It is required that *whether they eat or drink, or whatever they do, they should do all* with reference to this object. As then we can rely on the decision of infinite wisdom, expressed both in the example and precepts of God, we are assured that this kingdom ought to engross the supreme cares of men, and exert a commanding influence over all their actions;—that it should be the great

object of their lives, and their governing motive every hour. The bosom of the *child* should be taught to beat with delight at the name of Jesus, before it is capable of comprehending the nature of his kingdom. The *youth* ought to regulate all his pleasures, his actions, and his hopes, with an eye fixed on this kingdom. The *man* ought to respect it in every important undertaking, in all his common concerns, in the expressions of his lips, in the government of his passions, in the thoughts of his heart. Not worldly emolument or distinction, but the interest of the blessed Redeemer, should be his highest object,—should be daily and hourly loved and sought with all his heart and soul. To this should he consecrate all his talents, all his influence, all his wealth. Instead of pursuing with headlong zeal their separate interests, all men should join in promoting this kingdom, as the common interest of mankind,—the great concern for which they were sent into the world."

The two next paragraphs have much energy.

"If the eyes of men were opened, they would see this cause to be of infinite value,—*worthy* to be the object for which all things were created. It is the cause which not only all the energies of nature, but all beings and agents, conspire to advance. It is the beloved cause on which the heart of the Son of God was set, when it beat in the babe of Bethlehem, and when it bled on the point of the spear. It is the cause to which angels have zealously ministered; to which devils have involuntarily lent their aid. It is the cause which has engaged the ardent attention of wise and good men in every age. It is the cause for which patriarchs prayed, for which prophets taught, for which apostles toiled, for which martyrs bled. For the consummation of this cause upon earth many eyes have waited, from age to age, in unwearied expectation; *many prophets and righteous men have desired to see it*; many who sealed their faith with their blood, looked forward to this glorious event with eyes glistening in the agonies of death. *The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together* to bring forth this grand consummation.

"The cause of Christ is the only one which will *prevail* and *live* amidst the wrecks of time. Strong as the arm of omnipotence, it will hold on in its majestic course, bearing down and crushing every thing that resists its progress. Every interest that is placed on this foundation is safe; but inevitable ruin awaits every thing beside. Wo to the man whose destinies are not united with the kingdom of Christ. Wo, wo to the man who sets himself to oppose this holy kingdom.

As the preacher advances he becomes more interesting.

"Lend me an angel's harp, while I look forward to approaching scenes, which, distant as they then were, enraptured the souls of the holy prophets. How divinely did they sing, when, from the mount of vision, they beheld across the shade of many troublous years the church standing on the field she had won, triumphantly shouting, *Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation.* Sometimes in the midst of their sorrows, while nothing was escaping them but the sounds of a breaking heart, a glimpse of this glory would break upon their view; and then the tear which stood in their eye forgat to fall, their half-uttered sigh died upon their tongue, they awoke to rapture, and exclaimed, *Thou shalt arise and have mercy on Zion, for the time to favour her, yea the set time is come.*"

"A thousand times ten thousand captives shall drop their chains, and come forth to light with joys too big for utterance; and this miserable world, once the emblem of hell,—this miserable world, after being so long shaken with tempests, shall, like the waters of a peaceful pool, reflect the image of heaven. Paradise shall be restored; and then shall appear, to the confusion of all the enemies of Christ, the blessed efficacy of his gospel to heal the wounds of a bleeding world. This is the triumph of the woman's seed;—this, the bruising of the serpent's head. Is not every christian rapt as he thus views from Pisgah the promised rest on earth? Is enthusiasm here a crime? Would not coldness be rebellion? Come, thou *Desire of nations*, come! Come, thou restorer of a world!"

"Follow only one human soul into eternity; trace its endless course through delights which flesh and blood could not sustain, or through fire sufficient to melt down all the planets;—pursue it through the ascending degrees of its eternal progression, see it leaving behind the former dimensions of seraphim and cherubim, and still stretching towards God,—or sinking forever in the bottomless abyss.—My God! what an event is the redemption of a single soul! O the infinite mercy that redeemed such countless millions! O the boundless compassion of Christ,—the ocean without a bottom or a shore! *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God*, which are disclosed in this unfathomable plan of grace!"

The application of this excellent sermon is conducted with much ingenuity and judgment. It grows immediately out of the preceding discussion, and is gradually brought home with increas-

ing force upon the hearts and consciences of the hearers. We transcribe two more passages to show what an exalted and just idea the preacher has formed of the importance of the missionary cause.

"In applying this subject I would summon, were I able, all the kingdoms of the earth to arise in one mass to urge forward the cause of the Redeemer. Assemble, ye people, from the four quarters of the globe; awake, ye nations, from your sleeping pillow,—combine in this grand object of your existence,—this common interest of the world. Ye kindreds and tribes, why are ye searching for happiness out of this kingdom, and overlooking the cause of Christ, as though he had no right to hold an interest on earth? Know ye that no man is licensed to set up another interest on this ground which is sacred to the Redeemer? What have you to do in *this* world if you will not serve the Lord's Anointed? If you will not submit to his dominion, and join to advance his cause, go, go to some other world—this world was made for Christ.—— But whither can you go from his presence? All worlds are under his dominion. Ah! then return, and let your bosoms swell with the noble desire to be fellow-workers with the inhabitants of other worlds in serving this glorious kingdom."

"Standing, as I now do, in sight of a dissolving universe, beholding the dead arise, the world in flames, the heavens fleeing away, all nations convulsed with terror, or rapt in the vision of the Lamb,—I pronounce the conversion of a single pagan of more value than all the wealth that ever omnipotence produced. On such an awful subject it becomes me to speak with caution; but I solemnly aver, that were there but one heathen in the world, and he in the remotest corner of Asia, if no greater duty confined us at home, it would be worth the pains for all the people in America to embark together to carry the gospel to him."

We pass over a few infelicities of expression (such as, "from whence;" "for once,") to remark, that we cannot agree with the worthy author in the sentiment that the Son of God is to be regarded as mediator in creating the universe. We apprehend, that the scriptures teach us to view him, in the act of creating, as the second person in the Trinity. Hence, in this connexion, he is called, "The Son of God," "The Word," &c. The passages which the preacher adduces do not, in our apprehension, support his sentiment. In the chapter from which he has taken his text, the apostle is evidently describing the dignity of the Saviour's person, as well as the glory of his office, with a view to confirm the faith of the Colossians in him, by showing how eminently he

was qualified for the work of redemption. From the 15th to the 17th verse, inclusive, the sacred writer treats of the dignity of the Saviour's person, and he presents him as God, the creator, governor, and end of all things; and from the 18th verse he begins to treat of the glory of his office, and represents him as the head of the church, in whom is all fulness. In Ephesians iii. 9, 10, the latter verse should be connected, not with the last, but with the other clause of the former verse; the apostle, in the 10th verse, refers to the mystery of which he had been speaking. The developement of the mystery of uniting jews and gentiles into one church, is that which is here represented as displaying to principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God.

The author seems to be aware, that the foundation on which he rests his sentiment is not sufficient. For he says, in a note, "If the sentiment that other worlds were created for the Mediator should not appear sufficiently supported, I am willing it should be understood as expressed rather hypothetically than positively. The author has no title either to the honour or dishonour of originating the idea, which has been held by divines of reputation, and possesses at least the negative merit of not contradicting any of the doctrines of our church."

On the whole, we hesitate not to pronounce this to be a very excellent discourse. It evinces the author to be a man of very considerable genius, of ardent piety, and of a glowing imagination. His conceptions are strong and masculine, and he expresses them with perspicuity and force. We warmly recommend the perusal of this sermon to every one who wishes to receive instruction and delight happily blended; and the more so, because the profits arising from the sale of it will be appropriated to the missionary cause.

SELECTIONS.

FROM THE CHRISTIAN OBSERVER.

Mr. Editor,

A short time ago, I paid a visit to an old friend at his residence in a remote part of the kingdom, whom I had not seen for eighteen years, and I am disposed to think the narrative of the circumstances of that interview, and of the consequences attending it, will not be uninteresting to yourself or your readers.

My acquaintance with Theophilus (for that is the title under which I shall conceal the name of my friend,) began at the university, which we entered and quitted nearly at the same time; and it was improved into an intimacy by an occasional intercourse of several years. He was sensible, lively, affable, generous, and humane; but with these qualities he had one fault, which often made me tremble for its consequences, an impetuosity of temper which ill brooked opposition or restraint. In 1785 I left England, under a promise of writing to Theophilus, which I never performed, although I always retained a sincere regard for him. I returned to my native country at the close of the last century, and inquiring after the companion of my youth, I learnt that, in 1787, he had succeeded to a large estate in ——shire, and had ever since lived in the country, visiting the metropolis only when called to it by business of importance.

Intending to surprise him by an early visit, I forbore writing to him, but from circumstances which it is unnecessary to particularize, I had no opportunity of executing my intention before the beginning of last September, when, without any previous notice, I repaired to his house. At the distance of three quarters of a mile from it, I passed through a village, which I was informed had been established by Theophilus; the neatness of the cottages, and the appearance of their inhabitants, bespoke industry, order, economy, and comfort. My name, as that of a perfect stranger, was announced to him by a servant. I heard it repeated with a vivacity which convinced me that I was not forgotten, and that I should become a welcome visitor: in a moment afterwards my friend took me by the hand, and his voice confirmed what his countenance expressed, that he was really glad to see me.

We had chatted more than an hour, with all the hilarity and interest which a renewed friendship, after long separation, inspires, when we were most disagreeably interrupted by rude noises at the gate: a servant entering announced the arrival of some clamorous complainants, who required the interposition of my friend as a magistrate. He immediately arose, apologised for the necessity of attending his duty, and was preparing to leave the room, when I requested to accompany him. The parties stated their complaints, which had arisen out of a drunken brawl, with the greatest vehemence, although they were so trifling and ridiculous that I could not suppress my vexation at the ill-timed intrusion. My friend, however, heard them, not merely with patience, but with complacency; and I admired the dexterity with which he

soothed and composed the enraged opponents, and the well adapted impressive admonition with which he discharged, after having reconciled, them. All was done without any emotion, and with so much good-humour, that I could not conceal my surprise. Theophilus, smiling, replied, " You knew me at a time when I should not have borne such a scene with so much composure, but since our separation I have been studying morals and manners in that book, (pointing to one which I saw was a Bible). In that," continuing his discourse with a rising animation in his voice and eyes, " there is a character described, which no mortal can ever hope to equal, but which I daily study, as a model of unattainable though imitable perfection; a character which combines such dignity and condescension, such sublimity and humility, so much forbearance under affront, such patience under ill usage, such love to God, and such good will to man, evinced by habitual piety and philanthropy, that even men of the world are compelled to admire it, whilst *those to whom it is given to understand it* love and adore it. Imagination never conceived a character so amiable, so elevated." From this and some other expressions I suspected that Theophilus had become a *Methodist*, and the morning and evening use of family prayer, with the general tenor of his conversation, so different from what it used to be, tended strongly to confirm the suspicion, although I saw nothing in his behaviour, or in that of his family, of the cant, precision, and formality attributed to people of that denomination. The suspicion, however, (I now confess it with shame,) abated somewhat of that cordiality which I felt on the first renewal of our intimacy; but an intercourse of a few days completely annihilated it, and my admiration of his character, and love of his person, hourly increased. His deportment was so invariably courteous and kind; his conversation, though serious, was so free from gloom, so affable and cheerful; his whole demeanour was so graceful and engaging, that I never saw the character of a fine gentleman more strikingly displayed than by him. Decorum, civility, and politeness, we expect, and usually find, in persons of a certain rank in life; but in him they appeared the expressions of innate benevolence. His complacency was without effort, the result of principle, the indication of a mind disciplined and composed; and, although I knew that his thoughts were frequently occupied by business of urgent importance which required intense consideration, I never saw him absent or embarrassed in society, or inattentive to conversation, to which, without any appearance of dictating, he often gave an improving and entertaining tone. But nothing struck me more

forcibly than his behaviour to young people. He seemed to feel, that to be extensively useful to them he must possess their esteem and confidence, and as this was an object which he had constantly in view, he conciliated their attachment by a familiarity which never lessened their respect for him. He would join them in the hours of recreation, participate their gaiety, and promote their innocent amusements; and, without the repulsive formality of instruction, contrived, even at those times, to impress upon their minds useful knowledge and important truths; and when he assembled them, as he often did, for the express purpose of instruction, it was conveyed in such a mode that they seemed as anxious to receive it as he was willing to impart it. Nor was the society of Theophilus less agreeable to the aged. The same behaviour endeared him to them which conciliated the young. In short, as a master, a landlord, or a member of society he was equally respected and esteemed by his family, his tenants, and his neighbours, and the influence of his opinions and conduct was beneficially felt wherever they were known. The embarrassed applied to him for advice, the distressed for assistance, and the unhappy for consolation, and the sympathy which he felt and exhibited on such occasions gave a grace to his generosity, and a softness to his admonition, which gained the affections, as well as the gratitude, of those whom he relieved. I regretted that I could not see him in the character of a husband and a father, but he had lost his wife three years before my visit to him, and the death of his only child had preceded that of its mother.

When I visited Theophilus it was my intention to pass a few days only with him, but I was attracted by the irresistible fascination of his society to prolong my stay. I joined in all the daily devotions of the family at first, rather (I will not disguise the truth) from a motive of conformity than from a sense of religion. But it was impossible to be long in the company of Theophilus without feeling the influence of his character. The union of piety and external elegance is irresistible; in him they were united, beyond what I ever saw in any man, and it was evident that he had not learned politeness from the fashionable world only, but that it was the expression of principle and feeling combined. The prayers which he used in the family were either those of our church, or compilations from the different services of it, or compositions of our best divines; and they were uttered by him with so much unfeigned devotion, that it was impossible to hear them often without being affected by them. I had, in fact, become in love with religion before I knew what it was; for, although my

mind had not been indurated by the maxims of infidel philosophy, I had never seriously considered the subject of revelation.

Theophilus remarked with pleasure the traces of this alteration, he improved the opportunity afforded him by it, of introducing moral and religious topics of conversation, to which, in the first days of our renewed acquaintance, I should have paid little attention; and he led me insensibly to the perusal of books calculated to enlighten my understanding, and awaken and alarm my apprehensions. Sometimes he would descant on the frivolous or vicious pursuits of the times, expatiate on the misery occasioned by them to individuals, families, and the nation; or contrast the turbulence and anxiety of a life of dissipation with the solid composure of a religious mind, and the dying despair or insensibility of the impenitent sinner with the serene confidence of the true believer. All this was done with so much judgment, that I felt its effect without perceiving the object of it. To shorten the narrative: I had passed a month with him, when one evening, after he had read a discourse to his family which furnished the subject of our subsequent conversation, he addressed me with an awful affecting seriousness, and in terms which I shall never forget.

"I love you, Edward, (said he), and I mean to give you a solid proof of my affection. Our friendship began in youth, and was founded on a similarity of dispositions, which led us to the same occupations and amusements. Let the friendship of our declining years be cemented by the rational desire of promoting the eternal welfare of each other. I now look back to the time when we passed our mornings and evenings together, in follies and pleasures, as a period of delirium; and whilst I tremble at the recollection of the dangers in which we were plunged by it, I adore with unspeakable gratitude the mercy which rescued me from it. To you I am bound to make this confession as an atonement for my criminality, in encouraging by my example and participation the thoughtless dissipation of your younger years. Ignorant of your situation abroad, and unapprised even whether you were living or dead, what pain have I not felt from the recollection of that period! Often have I raised my voice in prayer for you to the God of mercy, that he would look down upon you with compassion, and recall you from the dangerous courses in which you began the career of life. Most devoutly do I thank him, that he has afforded me an opportunity of telling you this myself; most devoutly do I implore him, that under his good providence I may be the means of rescuing my friend from the misery and destruction of sin. Eighteen

years, the third part of our lives, have elapsed in absence from each other; they have passed like a dream, and the remainder of our allotted existence, be it more or less, will soon vanish in the same manner, and the question, which we cannot evade, will then be asked, how we have passed our lives? Have we lived to the glory of God or to ourselves? What an alarming question to beings, who are created for an eternity of happiness or misery, deriving from nature a propensity to evil and aversion from good, with an incapacity in themselves to will or to do any thing pleasing to God! But the gracious father of mankind has not placed his children in a state of remediless misery; he has not imposed obligations upon them which cannot be discharged; and, though we cannot save ourselves, he has provided a salvation for us. Peruse the volume of eternal life, which has been given for our information; there the mystery of the redemption of man, which human imagination could never have conceived, is plainly revealed. Ruined by sin, man must have perished for ever, if the Son of God had not descended from heaven and made atonement for the sins of the world. He has borne the burthen of our iniquities, and the gates of immortality are no longer barred against us. Through faith in him we have access to the mansions of heavenly bliss, for he is the way, and the truth, and the life. But we cannot enter them with the pollutions of carnal desires and appetites, with earthly passions and affections. Our desires must first be spiritualized, our affections sanctified, our nature must undergo a purification, we must become new creatures before we are meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. For this purpose, a sanctifier is no less offered to man than a Redeemer, who sheds his purifying influence upon those who devoutly implore it, in the name of Jesus. Thus redeemed and sanctified what a scene of glory opens to our view! The earth, with all its thrones and potentates, their dignities and splendours, fade before it like the shadows of the night before the rising sun. But it is a theme too vast for mortal tongue, a vision too bright for human eyes."

Here Theophilus paused for a few moments, absorbed in contemplation of the divine wisdom and benevolence displayed in the redemption of man.

"Such (continuing his discourse) is the glorious hope which God in Christ has revealed to us! It is no fiction of the imagination, but rests upon the immutable promise of the eternal word, by whom the world was made. He calls upon all men to accept it, and prescribes the indispensable condition of repentance and faith. Believe and be saved; but faith, let it be remembered, must

ever be shown in love to him evinced by obedience to his commandments; that love which will make the duty of obedience easy and pleasant.

"But the same Jesus has also declared this alarming truth, that there is a state of endless misery for those who reject the gracious offers of God through him; who refuse to believe in their Saviour. Strive, my dear Edward, to escape it, whilst yet the hour of grace is given to you. The first step towards religion is a deep humiliating conviction that you are a sinner, and as such, an offence to a holy God, whose eyes are purer than to behold iniquity; this will lead you to the consideration how you are to escape his wrath, and to the interposing mercy of Christ. May the divine grace impress this conviction deeply on your heart; implore it in the name of Jesus; put up your petitions also for understanding to comprehend the great mystery of redemption through a crucified Saviour, for repentance and faith; and I will offer up mine that the Holy Spirit may pour down upon you his illumination, and by his sanctifying influence renew you in that righteousness and holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."

The tears fell from his eyes as he concluded, and mine had bedewed my cheeks whilst he was speaking. He pressed me to his bosom with an affectionate embrace, and we separated for the night.

I was too much affected by his discourse to enjoy much repose, and although my mind was in some degree prepared for its impression, it excited a variety of ideas which I had never before, or imperfectly, entertained. "If this be true, in what condition am I? Have I not lived without God in the world? a mere conformist to the practice of religion, without any knowledge of its spirit? What would become of my soul, if God this night should require it of me?" Such, amongst many others, were the reflections which occurred to me. I felt a desire to pray, as well as the necessity of prayer, but I could scarcely utter more than repeated ejaculations. In the morning, though dejected, I was somewhat more composed, and I then confessed my sins to God, and implored his pardon in the name of Christ, with a devotion which I had never before felt. I made no hesitation in communicating all my emotions to Theophilus; he rejoiced to perceive them, and whilst he endeavoured to relieve my mind from despondency, earnestly inculcated the duty of benefiting by the grace of God, which through his means had been offered to me, as well as the danger of rejecting it.

You will anticipate the conclusion of my narrative. My invaluable friend, who, by the blessing of God, sowed the seed of the word in my heart, never ceased to water it and promote its growth. We daily read the scriptures together, he showed me the connexion between the Old and New Testament, pointed out the most remarkable prophecies which had been completed, particularly those relating to the Messiah; explained difficult passages, and noticed others as affording important subjects for meditation, and he read the sublime strains of devotion in the scriptures with a rapturous animation that seemed almost inspired.

How different do I now appear to myself from what I was when I entered the house of Theophilus. I look back with horror to many scenes of my life, which I used to retrace with complacency; and I feel more satisfaction from this contrition than I ever derived from that dissipation in which I formerly thought myself happy. Under a deep and humiliating sense of the iniquities of my past life, I take a delight in spiritual meditations, which, six months ago, I was incapable of conceiving. I look with trembling hope for pardon and redemption, through the atonement of a crucified Saviour; and whilst, in humble dependence on the assistance of divine grace, I endeavour to work out my salvation with fear and trembling, I feel a joy, and peace in believing, unknown before.

Such, Sir, is my present state, for which, by the blessing of God, I am indebted to Theophilus. This narrative, if it have no other effect, will exemplify the great importance of a conformity between external manners and internal rectitude. If, instead of appearing to me as he did, I had found my friend reserved, formal, and precise; if he had not won my esteem by the kindness and urbanity of his deportment; in short, if christianity in him had not appeared as amiable as his profession of it was sincere, though I might have respected his virtues, if I could have discovered them, I should, probably, have left his house after a few days residence in it with the same mind with which I entered it. But I would not be understood, by any thing I have said, to depreciate the worth of those plain, simple, unpolished characters, who bear the rich jewels of christian faith and love in an unseemly casket. The religion of Christ is, doubtless, made for the poor and uneducated, as well as for the rich and polite. Its proper effect, however, in all, is to produce that genuine politeness of manner which consists in affability, kindness, courtesy, and condescension; and although many are debarred from acquiring the easy and graceful manners, and the external polish of Theo-

philus, yet the christian humility, and the christian love, which give to these their intrinsic value, are equally attainable by all who are truly religious, and ought to be uniformly exhibited in their conduct and conversation.

This last week has placed Theophilus in a new point of view. He has been confined to his room for the first time of his life, with a painful disorder, which scarcely allows him sleep or repose. But his temper has suffered no alteration; placid, patient, and submissive, he bears the severity of disease without a murmur, and leaves the event to him with whom are the issues of life and death. There are intervals in which the fervour of devotion suspends the intensity of pain; and when he expatiates on the ineffable love and mercy of God, as revealed in Jesus, the animation of his countenance bespeaks not only gratitude, but all the joy of hope.

You will ask, Sir, what are my feelings on this trying occasion: I know not how to describe the mixed sensations of grief, anxiety, admiration, fear, and affection; they are best expressed by my fervent prayers to God for his recovery. The crowd of anxious inquirers, which surrounds his house, shows how extensively he is beloved; and returning yesterday from the church, the humid eyes, desponding faces, and unsuppressed sighs of his friends and neighbours, who explored my looks with penetrating anxiety, affected my heart in a manner which I cannot describe. He is now somewhat recovered, and we have a fair prospect of his restoration to health. I tremble, however, whilst I write; but would say, thy will, O God, be done.

ASIATICUS.

[*To be continued.*]

REASONS OF REPOSE.

From a pamphlet lately printed in London, entitled "*Reasons* of *Repose*, or a morning conversation with a Lady under temporary alarms respecting the truth of the Scriptures."

I MYSELF was once a professed infidel: that is, one who, carried away first by the love of sin, hoped the Bible might not be true. I then listened to such as were hardened enough to assert as much; till at length, I believed my own lie; and the vanity of appearing something like a philosopher who had thrown off the traditions of the nursery, set me to propagating that lie. But when, like the Prodigal, *I came to myself*, I had many painful steps to tread back, and many difficult and intricate paths to re-

trace. I now wished the Bible might be true, and was glad to receive help from any able guide who had written on its evidences. Grotius, bishop Butler, and many others, helped me to see, that he who is acquainted with the evidence God has annexed to his word, has not only every thing he can reasonably require, but that, as Mr. Soame Jenyns has remarked, he will find *it requires more faith to be a consistent infidel than to be a christian.*

But you ask, "Do you never feel a shake after all this inquiry and experience?" I answer now and then, an unexpected and malignant blast meets my mind, and obliges me to have recourse to my usual method. Perhaps after what I have known and felt, I ought to repel it instantly as a temptation: Perhaps, at my standing, I ought not to honour such an assault with any examination at all; but I am telling you not what may be my *duty*, but what is my *practice:* moreover, such is the frame of my mind, that I fear no other method than that which I take would satisfy it. As soon then as an alarm is given, I cast the eye of my mind over the leading evidences of the scriptures of which I have an habitual recollection, and which I need not particularize in their order to *you:* I likewise contemplate *facts* and *experience*, and soon obtain repose.

Like a man who is told that the foundation of his house is in danger, I call for the key of the vaults on which my dwelling stands; I light a candle; walk down stairs, and pass very deliberately through the arches. I examine very particularly the arch suspected, and after having satisfied myself that the foundation remains perfectly safe, I walk up again, lock the door, hang up the key, put out the candle, and quietly go about my business, saying as I go, "They make a racket, but I find ALL'S SAFE."

"Have you had occasion," say you, "often thus to go down?" Not very often. "Did you always return satisfied?" Always. "Then be so kind as to mention some part of that train of thinking from which this satisfaction arises."

Were I, Madam, conversing with an infidel, it would be proper to bring forward a regular statement of the evidences of revelation, but this will not be necessary here, especially, as your present request respects only those considerations which generally satisfy *my own mind.*

I shall begin with informing you, that I cannot look around me without being struck with that analogy observable in the works of God: I find the Bible written in the style of his other books of creation and providence. The pen seems in the same hand; I see it indeed write, at times, mysteriously in each of these books; but I know that mystery in the works of God is

only another name for *my ignorance*. The moment therefore I become humble, all becomes right.

I observe nothing coming from the hand of man like the Scriptures in majesty or wisdom, in sanctity or simplicity; and especially in marking the distinctions between right and wrong; and that too at a time when the most enlightened of the pagan world were confounding them. When I look into the theology of the heathen (that is of all without the light of revelation) I find the grossest errors, and often the most extravagant fables, pervading their best systems: but upon turning to the Bible it seems to be said again, "LET THERE BE LIGHT." Here, alone, I find the true God; and discover his real character from his own declarations and dispensations. The altar raised to an "*unknown God*" stands a monument of the blindness and wretchedness of the worshippers. But in the Bible I see *Glory is given to God in the highest; peace on earth* is revealed; and *good will to men* so expressly points out the *means* of this peace, that if these means were universally adopted, the present "*bedlam of the universe*" must be immediately changed into a happy state of order, truth and love. Of this I can no more doubt, than I can doubt that I am at this moment endeavouring to recollect our morning conversation.

The Bible also contains the true history of man, so that there is not a word in his mouth, or a thought in his heart, but its Author knew them altogether. Well, therefore, might one say, "*give me a Bible and a candle in the deepest dungeon, and I will tell you all that is going on in the world.*" In this book only I see the real character and deep malignity of that disorder in creation, called *sin*, fully exposed. I see also a holy law by which it must be tried. I see the infinite worth of that soul of man on which sin acts as a fatal poison. I am able to see so much of the eternal world as to form a just estimation of the present. I am here taught my real *wants* and *resources;* but what benighted views had the wisest of the heathens of these most important truths! Well might he say, "Either God must send a special teacher, or man must for ever remain in ignorance."

I see also in this sacred record a Redemption or recovery suited to my fallen state, and that, in this recovery, God has not only consulted the need of his creature man, but also the honour of his own character and government. But in conducting the concerns of an infinite government I do not stumble at finding that "*God's thoughts* are not as *my thoughts*."

I see the means of this recovery pointed out to man at his fall, and expressly held forth by *prophecy* during a course of four

thousand years; and that by a succession of pious men of various ranks, ages, and nations; and living under different dispensations; incapable, therefore, of *concerting* a plan though perfectly harmonizing in their grand object. I cannot conceive how this harmony could be produced but by inspiration of God.

Such a union in prediction, and such exact correspondence in event, together with the fulfilment of their *other* predictions contained in this book, I view as a STANDING MIRACLE to this day in proof of its inspiration.

We need not go to the New Testament to learn the history of Christ and his kingdom. An ancient record, scrupulously preserved through ages by his present enemies, the Jews, foretells the time, place, and manner of his birth; the circumstances of his life, rejection, miracles, death, and resurrection; the subjects of his kingdom, its progress, opposition, and victory. Nor did this chain of prophecy close on his appearing, for he expressly declared what should follow on his gospel being rejected by the Jews; he gave an exact description of the overthrow of their church and state, together with a declaration of the events of his own kingdom to the end of the world. Every other book is perfectly dark on these most important of all truths, but on opening this, by far the most ancient in the world, I see them all expressly set before me.

Nor is this grand event notified only by prophets. To keep alive and direct the expectation which had been raised, I observe a long train of emblems or types instituted; *shadows of good things to come* were kept up, and special tokens of the divine presence were afforded until SHILOH came, to whom it had been long predicted *the nations should be gathered.*

In the fulness of time I see SHILOH come. And I perceive the broad seal of heaven in *signs, wonders, and mighty deeds*, set to his mission. So grand a design is worthy of such an attestation. Omnipotence could find no difficulty in producing it: and the witnesses are unimpeachable. Bad men could not invent such a *character* as Christ; good men could not attest *falsities*. A number of pious and consistent witnesses could neither be deceived themselves, nor deceive others as to the facts they had seen, which they recorded, and stood ready to seal with their blood. They could appeal to whole churches as living witnesses of the continuance of this seal; even the infidels of *that* day did not attempt to deny the facts, however absurdly they attempted to account for them.

[*To be continued.*]

J. C's. JOURNAL.

[*Continued from page* 303.]

MANY of the chiefs came to see us, and we lodged at one of their houses, on a clean bed, while the family lay round the fire, on the floor.

The Stockbridge Indians have been in expectation of a schoolmaster being sent them from New-York, as their children are daily increasing, and they seem anxious for their being taught to read. As yet no schoolmaster has appeared.

About eleven o'clock the Stockbridge sachems were convened in council, with a number of the principal women; my Indian girls, with my friend J. D. and myself, were admitted. The men and women sat apart, in as orderly a manner as if they had been in a place of worship. They appeared to me to be deep in council, and wise in their observations. We waited some time for their aged chief; when he came, he was placed in a large armed chair, the other chiefs on his right hand, and the interpreter on his left. My friend and myself sat near the interpreter; the women sat in three rows, opposite the chiefs. All sat some time in silence, after which I rose and addressed them as follows:

"Brothers, The love I always felt for you and your children, has induced me to leave all that is near and dear to me, my property and my business to come and see you. It is neither interest, curiosity, nor care, that has brought me from my home; but that I might safely return you those children you delivered into my care, that you might see and know their qualifications and improvements received among us. And, as the great and good Spirit has preserved them in innocency, sobriety, and industry, during their absence from you, I hope they will continue therein; and that you will unite with us, to encourage them in every good word and work, that by their means the chain of friendship between us may grow stronger and brighter. This is the sincere desire of your brother."

The interpreter then made the following answer:

"Brother, attend. We wish to speak a few words to you. We feel thankful to the great good Spirit, that he put concern in your heart for us poor Indians, so that you were willing to leave your friends, to take so long a journey, and that you kindly and safely conducted our young women home, whom we put under your care some years ago. We rejoice that the great good Spirit has protected and preserved you all the way, while you walked the

long path, so that you are safely arrived here, by the side of our fire-place, in good health, and that we are allowed to see each other's face this day. Friend, we are sensible that all the kindness you have done, has been purely out of love to us, for which, we, with our women, heartily thank you. We hope we shall never forget your kindness. Respecting the kind talk which you brought us from our friends; we wish to send a few words to them in writing, therefore we desire you to stay with us all day and night that we may have time to write to our friends, and that you may take a little more rest."

This evening many of the chiefs came again to see us, and smoked their pipes of friendship at the fire, and told many striking stories, which were explained by the interpreter. The kindness received from these natives of the wilderness, I attributed to the mercy of the Lord, who is thus opening rivers in dry places, and streams in the desert. What am I, O Lord, who am so poor and needy, that thou shouldst show to me such favour among this people. The Indians, among other things, mentioned a visit they intended to make to some distant nations of Indians, to inform them what sort of white people they should receive and in whom they might put confidence in council.

I was privately applied to, this morning, by one of my Indian girls, named Elizabeth Baldwin, who complained that her father was an intemperate man; and that the night before last he was much intoxicated; she feared she could not live at home, apprehending that what she made by her labour, he would spend for strong liquor. In this unpleasant occurrence, I called a chief, her mother, and some of the most serious Indians together to consult with Elizabeth Baldwin what was best to be done. Some very useful remarks were made by the Indians, and, on the whole, it was concluded, that Elizabeth should remain with her mother, and the Indians agreed to take the necessary care to prevent her being imposed upon.

After this, I took my leave of my charge, urging it upon them daily to look unto the Lord, the great and good Spirit, that they might be preserved, and helped through the slippery path of life. They promised to attend to my counsel, and then parted with me in tears. A number of the Indians came to see the last of us.

We sat off to go hence and visit a town of Tuscarora Indians. The roads at first sight seemed almost impassable; a cloudy and rainy day increased our difficulties; the waters were also high in the creeks. We at last arrived safe at Oneida, at the

house of the principal sachem. Here I felt the importance of my situation; at this house were six fine looking Indian women, and two Indian men; they were all heathens. They could not speak a word of English, nor I a word of Indian. In this situation, my mind was brought to consider what manner of persons we ought to be, who profess the name of Christ before such people, that no part of our conduct should become a stumbling-block unto them. It was not long since, that this nation held a council, in order to consider, whether they should return to their former customs of sacrificing their dogs, and lay aside all christianity, spirituous liquors, profane speaking, and other evils, which, they said, abounded among those who called themselves Christians; but the question was not carried. While in this house, the women showed me an Indian child, tied on a keelah of exquisite workmanship, and by their fingers gave me to understand it was four weeks and four days old. They also very gravely showed me a curious twisted string, full of knots, with a red string tied to every seventh knot, every one of which denoted a day, and every red knot a week. This was to show how long the chief's wife had lost a valuable daughter.

15th. This morning I arose from a hard and cold bed, under much poverty of spirit. Oh that I may depend wholly on the Lord for help in every time of trial and distress! I breakfasted on a cold Indian dumpling; but was led to be satisfied with every hardship, so be that I may be found in my place. While we waited for an interpreter, I went with my friend to visit a Presbyterian minister, who is a Missionary to, and resides among, the Stockbridge Indians. He received us in an open and candid manner. On the arrival of the interpreter, we went to council. He seemed to be a young man of a good understanding. His eyes, and about his ears, were painted red, with four trinkets in his nose. The chiefs took their seats, and we continued in council till seven o'clock in the evening. Great harmony prevailed, and I found the knowledge and assistance of my friend, J. D. peculiarly serviceable. While in council, the Presbyterian minister, John Sergeant, came to see us. In conversation, I observed to him, that those who had the gospel committed to their charge, would do well to take heed not to scatter the seed of the gospel amongst the logs and bushes. If ever the seed of the gospel should take root among the Indians, obstructions must first be removed out of the way. This he fully agreed to, and informed me, that to this end they were about opening a school for instructing the children.

In council I read to them a letter from friends, sentence by sentence; each of which was interpreted to them. They then smoked their pipes of friendship, and addressed us thus:

"Brothers, We have read your counsel and advice at this time, as well as at many others, and are made thankful, that the great good Spirit continues to put you in remembrance of us, to give us this good counsel and advice. Some of us have agreed to endeavour to follow it, and improve our land, raise more cattle, grain, and flax, and teach our young women to spin, and other useful employments in the house; we have improved in building houses and barns, and find great good from it.

"Brothers, We wish to listen to your counsel and advice, not to offend or hurt one another, nor go to war. We last summer had a general council at Buffalo creek, with many of the western tribes of Indians, where we all agreed to live in peace, and renewed the chain of friendship. We wished to attend to the good Spirit, who will teach us to refrain from all evil practices.

"Brothers, We are sensible, that the great good Spirit governs the seasons, and some of us wish to live more and more in his favour, then we should be more and more worthy of his blessings, notwithstanding, through unwatchfulness, we are taken captive by the great and mighty destroyer.

"Brother J. C. We also thank you for your good counsel; we believe the great good Spirit has sent you among us; we will treasure it up in our hearts from day to day, and we will teach it unto our children, and we wish always to keep bright the chain of friendship, and remain your brothers."

While among these Indians, one of the chiefs, informed us, that a Baptist preacher, by the name of Holmes, had been two weeks among the Seneca Indians, endeavouring to propagate the gospel among them, but had not yet obtained admittance as a minister. What manner of persons ought they to be, who recommend christianity among the Indians? We now took our leave of our Indian brethren at Oneida, having, during my stay there, had my mind greatly impressed, both night and day, with the state of these poor souls. But He who is strength in weakness, and riches in poverty, has been near to me, and brought me out of all difficulties, and made hard things easy, and bitter things sweet: may my trust ever be in him.

We returned to my friend's house, and thence went to pay a visit to a religious industrious family of Indians, a few miles off, through a hilly wild country. When we came to the house,

they received us kindly. Here I found a large well bound bible, and Cruden's Concordance. I was informed that this Indian formerly kept a school at Oneida, and was of singular service to the children there. He is of a peaceful disposition, and frequently engaged in the ministry among them. His observations on the Indians, and their peculiar situation, were very just and affecting, and very similar to those that had occurred to me from my own experience.

We returned home to my friend's house by moon-light, with much calmness and serenity of mind. When we arrived, my friend exhorted his family, and some Indians who were at his house, to more circumspection and care. May the Lord be praised for placing me here at this time.

The next morning, being first-day, several Indians came and breakfasted with us, though a rainy day, with some snow. We sat together to wait upon the Lord. The Indians are remarkable for not walking out on a first-day, except on a religious account. In the afternoon, we visited a family of the Indians who were religious. My friend had some lively and important matter to communicate; and some of the Indians spoke unto us in a serious and solemn manner. We supped with them, and parted with tokens of sincere friendship.

[*To be continued.*]

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCES.

[*Continued from page* 234.]

"ANOTHER thing by which the Devil has great advantage, is the unheeded DEFECTS that sometimes are in the experiences of Christians, and those high affections wherein there is much that is truly good.

"What I now have respect to, is something *diverse* from that defect, or imperfection of *degree*, which is in every holy disposition and exercise in this life, in the best of saints: What I aim at is, experiences being especially defective in some particular thing that ought to be in them; which, though it be *not* an *essential* defect, or such a defect as is in the experiences of hypocrites, which renders them utterly vain, monstrous, and altogether abominable to God, yet is such a defect as maims and deforms the experience: The *essence* of truly Christian experiences is *not* wanting, but yet *that is* wanting which is very needful in order to the proper *beauty* of the image of Christ in such a person's expe-

riences; but things are very much out of a due *proportion*: There is indeed *much* of some things, but at the same time there is so *little* of some other things which should bear a proportion, that the *defect* very much deforms the Christian, and is truly odious in the sight of God.

"What I observed *before*, was something which deformed the Christian, as it was *too much*, something mixed, which does not belong to the Christian as such. What I speak of *now*, is something that deforms the Christian the other way, viz. by there *not* being *enough*, but there is something wanting which does belong to the Christian as such: The *one* deforms the Christian as a monstrous excrescence, the *other* as thereby the new creature is maimed, and some member in a great measure wanting, or so small and withering as to be very much out of due proportion. This is another spiritual calamity that the saints are liable to, through the great imperfection of grace in this life; like the chicken in the egg, in the beginning of its formation, in which, though there are indeed the rudiments or lineaments of all the parts, yet some few parts are plain to be seen, when others are so hid that they can hardly be seen without a microscope; and thus it appears monstrous, through the want of its several parts having attained their due proportion.

"When this deficiency and disproportion is great, as sometimes it is in real saints, it is not only a great deformity in itself, but has many ill consequences; it gives the devil great advantage, and leaves a door open for corruption, and exposes to very deformed and unlovely actions, and issues oftentimes in the great wounding of the soul.

"For the better understanding of this matter, we may observe, that God, in the revelation which he has made of himself to the world by Jesus Christ, has taken care to give a proportionable manifestation of *two* kinds of excellences or perfections of his nature, viz. *those* that especially tend to possess us with *awe* and *reverence*, and *those* that tend to win and draw and encourage us: By *the one*, he appears as an infinitely great, pure, holy, and heart-searching JUDGE; by the other, as a gentle and gracious FATHER, and a loving Friend: By the *one*, he is a pure, searching and burning *flame*; by the *other*, a sweet, refreshing *light*. These two kinds of attributes are as it were admirably tempered together in the revelation of the Gospel: there is a *proportionable manifestation* of justice and mercy, holiness and grace, majesty and gentleness, authority and condescension. God has thus ordered, that his divers excellences, as he reveals himself in the face of Jesus

Christ, should have a proportionable manifestation, herein providing for our necessities; he knew it to be of great consequence, that our apprehensions of these divers perfections of his nature, should be *duly proportioned* one to another: A DEFECT on the *one* hand, viz. having *much* of a discovery of his love and grace, *without* a proportionable discovery of his awful majesty, and his holy and searching purity, would tend to spiritual pride, carnal confidence, and presumption; and a DEFECT on the *other* hand, viz. having much of a discovery of his holy majesty, *without* a proportionable discovery of his grace, tends to unbelief, a sinful fearfulness, and spirit of bondage. Herein, therefore, chiefly consists that deficiency of experiences which I am now speaking of. The revelation God has made of himself in his *Word*, and the provision made for our spiritual welfare in the Gospel, is *perfect*; but yet the actual light and communications *we* have, are *not* perfect, but many ways exceedingly imperfect and maimed. Yea, experience plainly shews, that Christians *may* have *high* experiences in *some* respects, and yet their circumstances may be *unhappy* in *this* regard, that their experiences and discoveries are no more *general*. There is a great difference among Christians in this repect; some have much *more general* discoveries than others, who are upon many accounts the most amiable Christians.—Other Christians *may* have experiences that are very high, and yet there may be very much of this deficiency and disproportion: their high experiences are truly from the Spirit of God; but sin comes in by the *defect*, (as indeed all sin is originally from a defective privative cause); and in such a case, high discoveries, at the same time that they are enjoyed, may be, and sometimes are, the occasion, or *causa sine qua non*, of sin. Sin may come in at that back door, the gap which is left open; as spiritual pride often does. And many times the Spirit of God is quenched by these means, and God punishes the pride and presumption that rises, by bringing such darkness, and such awful consequences, and horrid temptations, as are enough to make one's hair stand on end to hear them. Christians, therefore, should diligently observe their own hearts as to this matter, and should pray to God that he would give them experiences in which *one* thing may bear a proportion to *another*, that God may be honored, and their souls edified thereby; and Ministers should have an eye to this, in their private dealings with the souls of their people.

"It is chiefly from such a defect of experiences, that some things have arisen, that have been pretty common among true

Christians of late, which have been supposed by many to have arisen from a good cause; as particularly talking of divine and heavenly things, and expressing divine joys with laughter, or a light behaviour. I believe, in many instances, such things have arisen from a good cause, as their *causa sine qua non;* that high discoveries, and gracious, joyful affections have been the *occasion* of them: But the *proper cause* has been sin, even that odious *defect* in their experience, whereby there has been wanting a sense of the awful and holy majesty of God as present with them, and their nothingness and vileness before him, proportionable to the sense they have had of God's grace and the love of Christ.—And the same is true in many cases of persons' unsuitable boldness, their disposition to speak with authority, intemperate zeal, and many other things which sometimes appear in true Christians under great religious affections.

"And sometimes the vehemence of the motion of the animal spirits under great affections, is owing in considerable measure to experiences being thus partial. I have known it in several instances, that persons have been greatly affected with the dying love of Christ, and the consideration of the happiness of the enjoyment of him in heaven, and other things of that nature, and their animal spirits at the same time have been in a great emotion; but in the midst of it, they have had given them a deep sense of the holy, awful majesty of God, and it has at once composed them and quieted animal nature, without diminishing their comfort, but only has made it of a better and more solid nature; when they had a sense both of the *majesty* and *grace* of God, one thing has as it were balanced another, and caused a more happy sedateness and composure of body and mind.

"From these things we may learn how to judge of experiences, and to estimate their goodness. *Those* are *not always* the *best* experiences, which are attended with the most *violent affections*, and most vehement motions of the animal spirits, or that have the greatest effects on the *body;* nor are they always the best which most dispose persons to abound in *talk* to others, and to speak in the most vehement manner, (though these things often arise from the greatness of spiritual experiences). But *those* are the *most excellent* experiences which are qualified as follows:—1. That have the *least mixture*, or are the most purely spiritual—2. That are the *least deficient* and partial, in which the divers things which appertain to Christian experience are *proportionable* one to another—And, 3. That are raised to the *highest degree:* It is no matter how high they are raised; *if* they are qualified as be-

fore mentioned, *the higher the better.* Experiences *thus* qualified, will be attended with the most amiable behaviour, and will bring forth the most solid and sweet fruits, and will be the most durable, and have the greatest effect on the abiding temper of the soul.

"If God is pleased to carry on this work, and it should prove to be the dawning of a general revival of the Christian Church, it may be expected that the time will come before long, when the experiences of Christians shall be much more generally thus qualified. We must expect green fruits before we have ripe ones. It is probable that hereafter the discoveries which saints shall have of divine things, will be in a much higher degree than yet they have been; but yet shall be so ordered of an infinitely wise and all-sufficient God, that they shall not have so great an effect, in proportion, on the body, as they have had in many instances since this late great revival among us, but will be less oppressive to nature; so that the outward manifestations will rather be like those that were in *Stephen*, when he was full of the Holy Spirit, when *all that sat in the council, looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.* Their inward fulness of the Spirit of God, in his divine, amiable and sweet influences, shall as it were shine forth in a heavenly aspect and manner of speech and behaviour.

[*To be continued.*]

ANECDOTES.

The late Rev. Reece Pritchard, of Wales, was for some time awfully ensnared by the sin of drunkenness, but was at length recovered from it in the following singular way. He had a tame goat which was wont to follow him to the ale-house which he frequented; and one day, by way of frolic, he gave the poor animal so much ale that it became intoxicated. What particularly struck Mr. P. was, that from that time, though the creature would follow him to the door, he never could get it to enter the house. Revolving on this circumstance in his mind, Mr. P. was led to see how much the sin, by which he had been enslaved, had sunk him beneath a beast; and he not only became a sober man from that time, but through the divine grace, an exemplary christian, and a very successful minister of the gospel.

Among the anxious inquirers for news, during the dreadful suspense of invasion, in England, a young gentlemen asked a

pious lady one day in the neighbourhood of Westbury, "What news Madam? Is there any news to-day?" She replied, "The best news is in the second chapter of Luke."

Lord Chesterfield being at supper with Voltaire and Madame C——, the conversation turned on the affairs of England. "I think, my lord," said the lady, "that the parliament of England consists of five or six hundred of the best informed and most sensible men in the kingdom." "True, madam, they are generally supposed to be." "What then can be the reason they should tolerate so great an absurdity as the *Christian* religion?" "I suppose, madam, it is because they have not been able to substitute any thing better in its stead; when they can, I don't doubt but in their wisdom they will readily accept it."

Lord Peterborough, who, like the nobleman last mentioned, was more distinguished by his wit than his religion, passing some days with the amiable Fenelon, was so delighted with the company and conversation of the archbishop, that he observed at parting, "If I stay here any longer, I shall become a christian in spite of myself."

Mr. Tilly was a celebrated atheist of the last age. He was a man of wit and had by rote all the ribaldry and common-place jests against religion and scripture which are well suited to display pertness and folly, and to unsettle a giddy mind, but are offensive to men of sense, whatever their opinions may be, and are neither intended nor adapted to investigate truth. The brilliancy of Mr. Tilly's wit, however, carried him a degree further than we often meet with in the annals of profaneness. In general, the witty atheist is satisfied with entertaining his *contemporaries;* but Mr. Tilly wished to have his sprightliness known to *posterity*. With this view, in ridicule of the resurrection, he obliged his executors to place his dead body, in its usual garb, and in his elbow chair, upon the top of a hill, and to arrange on a table before him, bottles, glasses, pipes and tobacco. In this situation he ordered himself to be immured in a tower of such dimensions as he prescribed, where he proposed, he said, to wait the event. All this was done, and the tower, still enclosing its tenant, remains as a monument of his impiety and profaneness. The country people shudder as they go near it.

—— "Religio pavidos terebat agrestes dira loci:—sylvam, saxumque tremebant."

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

Extracts from a letter received from the Rev. ROBERT FINLEY, at Basking Ridge, New-Jersey. Dec. 23, 1804.

WHEN the present year commenced, it found us in a profound sleep with regard to our everlasting concerns. All was still, nor was there a voice heard. The valley of the son of Hinnom was full of dry bones. Yet the day of deliverance was at hand, and at this midnight the cry was preparing, "the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him." The clergy of the presbytery of New-York, had now for a month or two been engaged in preaching from church to church, after the example of the Lord's disciples, who were sent out two by two. A serious attention to religion had also been excited in one of the adjoining churches. In the month of February I was invited by the Rev. Mr. Armstrong, pastor of the church at Mendham, to meet the brethren who were to visit his people about that time. I complied, and saw a large assembly eagerly bent on hearing the word of life. I saw no extraordinary appearances, and in my own soul felt no inward refreshings. I then learned what I have felt much more sensibly since, "that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth," "but that every good and perfect gift cometh down from the father of lights." Being invited to unite in the exertions that were making by the clergy in favour of religion, I gladly accepted, and met for the first time with the brethren on the first Tuesday in February. The assembly to which they preached was neither large nor solemn. But while making an address on the expostulation of Jesus "why stand ye here all the day idle," there was imparted to my soul a sensation and a view, which I hope was worth the world. I knew not what it was, and hardly what it meant. It was a dark night, but it seemed like the beginning of the light of heaven. The returning day brought my heart again to the same subject. I felt like one who had been bewildered, and was just awakening to the hope of deliverance from the maze. Towards evening my feelings came to a point, and I began to think of the afflicted captives by the streams of Babylon. Their mighty attachment to the beloved city was understood, and its fallen walls were mourned over. The remainder of the week was spent in eager lookings for the sabbath. When the sabbath arrived, the day was stormy and tempestuous, so that new discouragements were excited. There had been many fine days and crowded assemblies when there was no heart to speak, no agonizing desire to awaken and rescue men. And now, when the desire was intense, and the resolution superior to all fear of man, the people were kept at home. It was of him whose councils may not be challenged. Only about twenty persons attended the church. Of these about one third were professors, and of the remainder there was not one who was not laid under solemn conviction of sin. It now brings to my remembrance the army of Gideon which was reduced before it could gain the victory. The subject of discourse was that day, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." How literally true did the Lord now make it thus to be with regard to us. A good portion of the few of that day are now in union with the church, and none of them have turned back to folly as yet. Oh that the gracious Lord would prevent the curse of Chorazin and Bethsaida from coming upon them! The vibration of the stroke upon these few hearts was more widely felt than could have been expected. On the evening following there were about forty young persons assembled for their improvement in music. Their teacher did not attend; and under the awe of the preceding day, a few of them desired a discourse. It was given them from the words, "What is thy request?" It appeared to be from the Lord that the teacher did not come. Several persons were this evening awakened to a consideration of their ways, and when they were dismissed, it was delightful to observe that they went away with remarkable decorum and solemn silence. It seemed as if every heart had received a portion, the nature of which was yet to be opened up. It was natural and agreeable to duty to keep these things to myself, and ponder them well to see if the Lord was in very deed in them. Nearly the whole who were present on that occasion are now members of the church.

On Tuesday of this week the Rev. Messrs. Kollock and Thomson in their circuit visited my church for the first time; and they appeared to be sent in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel. The people attended generally, and

seemed as if they were in expectation that something of an interesting nature would take place. It has since been seen that impressions before made, were much deepened; and that various persons were newly awakened from their long sleep. The Lord had now prepared his means for producing a great and sudden sensibility on the subjects of the soul and eternity. A few persons from Mendham who were seriously seeking for eternal life, continued during Tuesday night in this vicinity, and next morning came to converse with the ministers at my house. As they approached, whoever beheld them seemed to look upon them as persons that had received a call to prepare to meet their God. I was asked whether I would be willing to meet with a few that evening; being much indisposed, I declined. Notice notwithstanding was given of a meeting, and when, contrary to my expectation, I attended, judge of my joy and wonder, when I saw a large assembly in solemn and weeping silence. Wherever I turned my eyes I observed anxiety and tears. The difficulty of beginning an address was only equalled by the difficulty of leaving off. A perfect silence was diffused throughout, till we were separating, when two young persons who were particular for their intimacy met each other from different parts of the house, and seeing their mutual situation, fell into each other's arms, with a momentary emotion, which was widely felt. It was now evident to all that there was much room for hope and prayer. We therefore appointed to meet on Friday of the next week at the Academy. You may suppose, sir, that the sabbath was looked for with an ardent desire. It was one of the most stormy days I ever saw. Notwithstanding this we had a very considerable assembly, who resembled Mr. Bunyan's pilgrim, when putting his hands on his ears, he began to run and cry, "Life! life! eternal life!" In company with brother Richards I took a preaching tour this week, (second week of February) and left my people until Friday morning. I had a most pleasant tour, though it was the severest weather we had this winter. In my absence, the almost instantaneous death of one of my most respectable people greatly increased the number and depth of the convictions. A large assembly collected at his funeral, and the very silence that reigned (for there was no service) seemed to be blessed by God to the furtherance of the work. The evening of the day on which I returned was our first regular meeting for prayer. The report had by this time spread through the congregation, that there was a serious awakening in the neighbourhood of the church. So that notwithstanding the darkness of the night, and badness of travelling, there was a large assembly. A discourse was preached without any thing remarkable except a very fixed attention. When the general round of exercises was gone thro' it was made known that any who wished, might depart, but that a few words would be addressed to those, who were supposed to be awakened by the Holy Spirit. No one departed. An address was then made, as above mentioned. When the awakened being summoned "to come out and separate," there was in the twinkling of an eye a suppressed cry from, it is supposed, not less than fifty persons. That I may be understood, I mean by a suppressed cry, a cry resembling that which weeping children utter, when they are forbidden to weep aloud. I leave you, my dear friend to conceive the sensations that must have been awakened in a case like this, in the bosom of a minister. Absorbed and lost in wonder, joy, and praise, we forgot the time and passed the hour generally prescribed by prudence. The first thought of passing time presented us with the hour of eleven. This is a solitary instance: and whether under these circumstances, it can be excused or not I cannot tell. But of this I am certain, it was a night to be remembered among a thousand. It might be counted upon as certain, that in the space of twelve days from the first sabbath till now, one hundred persons were brought under deep convictions.

On the next sabbath, each neighbourhood was desired to institute societies for prayer; and four or five of them were attended each week with preaching.

On the third week of Feb. there was nothing remarkable till Friday evening, in a distant part of the congregation, where there was weeping and lamentation which threatened disorder. It was occasioned by the accidental collection of a number of those most affected into one corner of the house. By advice it was immediately reduced to silence. This was a time of amazement to many hard and wicked persons, and it then seemed as if they would all bow with one accord. But while men slept, an enemy was permitted to sow tares, and for a season the heavenly plant was choked. In other distant parts of

the congregation there did not promise any thing of a harvest for some time. It might have been two months, which brings us to the month of May, before the work appeared in a powerful and general manner, in the southern part of the congregation. It then appeared to seize on nearly every heart. About this time I saw the only bodily affection (as it is called) that ever came under my observation. It was a case of a young woman who might be classed with the Gallios in religion. During the greater part of the discourse, she appeared utterly unconcerned. Towards the close, her countenance changed and fell visibly and in a moment. She began to pant like one asthmatic, shed for a minute a flood of tears, and when these were stayed, the panting increased, and seemed to approach to suffocation. Her hands were cold, and considerably convulsed. Without the least confusion she was removed into another room, where she was nearly alone, and where she could hear, for she was unwilling to be taken from the house. I have been more particular on this last point, because it is probable some misrepresentations have been made. About midsummer a similar solemnity began to appear in the western part of the congregation: and also in that part where it was mentioned the tares were sown, there was a precious and most acceptable reviving. In every quarter had there now been a truly heavenly shower, excepting in the east. There were droppings indeed as from the skirts of a majestic cloud, which lightened on some few of the most darkened and malignant, and a sure hope enlightened and sweetened their souls.

When we were almost in despair of this portion of our dear people, about the month of Nov. we were animated with a delightful prospect. On a certain evening, very dark and rainy, not more than forty persons attended. But so far as information has been obtained, there scarcely was an individual who was not greatly affected either with joy or anxiety. Some very hardened persons wept bitterly, and some very young persons were tenderly moved. The renewal of something like this has been very refreshing in the same place since that time, from which we are looking with humble hope for a little harvest. It had often seemed to me almost the sole cause of a minister's grief that men could not be made to awake. But now when there were so many excited to a serious consideration, there was an anxiety called up in my mind which had been unknown before. While the immortal soul stood hesitating between life and death, and there was a jeopardy every hour, lest temptation should prevail, or death close all opportunity, you may well suppose they were viewed with an earnest eye. Every human excitement was put before the heart: but experience gave evidence that conversion was no less a work of God than conviction. There were none who were made to taste very speedily of the joy of their Lord. In about five or six weeks however there were some who began to hope, that the Lord had graciously revealed himself to them. But these soon lost their hope, and were plunged more deeply than ever into sorrow, and overwhelmed more than before, with a sense of their sin and helplessness. Those who continued longer before obtaining faith and hope in the mercy of God appeared more steady from the beginning of their joy. Yet the former did for the most part recover again, and stand more firmly than at first. In the course of four months we received into the communion of the church with much mixed joy and fear, sixty-four persons. Others continued a longer or shorter period as it pleased him who is the truth and the life. I was happy beyond expression, when constantly mingling with the people, to find here and there springing up new plants of our heavenly Father's planting.

In the month of Oct. the church again opened her joyful bosom, and admitted fifty-six more to its communion. In the manner of conviction there was but little variety. The general grief was sin, and particularly the sin of forgetting God. The Lord brought to their remembrance his own expostulation, "If I be a father, where is my honour?" Grief for this sin seemed to be augmented from finding that by nature their hearts loved idols: they were still inclined to follow them. Thus were they taught, we hope, that conversion was necessary, and that it must come from God. The Lord was very gracious in this, that though conviction was very sharp with many, yet I have met with no instance that bordered on despair. When the Lord had said "thou hast destroyed thyself," he seemed to add, "but in me is thy help found." As the manner of conviction bore a strong affinity in nearly all; so their manner of expressing their hopes of acceptance with God, had a very great uniformity. There were a very few who

in the hour of deliverance, felt such a remarkable animation of the pleasing and dutiful dispositions of the heart, that they seemed to rest too much on the change of their feelings, and less on the great atonement. And there was one, and only one instance, of a person whose experience was of the visionary kind. While the greater part were humbled through a sense of their fallen and helpless state, and looked to him who was lifted up to take away the sins of the world; it was truly refreshing, and even establishing, to the seeking soul, to hear with what clearness some, who had been utterly ignorant of religion, now spoke of Christ, as the wisdom and power of God to every one that believeth. I have seen no instance of raptures, but have seen a great many solid comforts, which were truly delightful to behold.

I have already given some intimation of the number who were affected with a solemn view of the interests of the soul. It has been mentioned that a hundred and twenty had been added to the communion of the church. About forty others have expressed a belief that they are builded upon the rock of ages. In addition to these a large number were awakened to some serious concern; in all probably not less than three hundred persons of all ages, sexes, and descriptions. We had reason to hope that an aged man after he had lived considerably above eighty years, was received into the divine favour in the last month of his life. And what perhaps may be mentioned properly in this place, near the close of the work, there were four persons awakened on one sabbath, each nearly seventy years of age. The seriousness among little children was also very extensive, and though no encouragement whatever was given to do so, it was admirable to hear them telling of the light of the scriptures, and of their fear to go to sleep, lest they should lose their delightful views of heavenly things. The number of new convictions is now but very small; but that of those who heretofore had been roused to consideration, and are from time to time led to the waters of healing, is comfortably great. Blessed be God, as yet we have had nothing to lament as to the unbecoming walk of any. We have now a goodly flock; but already it begins to scatter. Nearly a dozen have removed; one or two have died; so that in a few years we shall stand in the same need as ever, of a summer and a harvest. Oh if the Lord may look on us, and keep us as the apple of his eye, and be ever ready to renew the happy year, which in free and rich grace is now given to us!

Thus, sir, I have traced a few of those events which have taken place among us, and if the relation shall be any satisfaction to you, it will be a pleasure to one, who is happy to say how respectfully and affectionately he is yours.

ROBERT FINLEY.

Extract of a Letter from the Rev. GIDEON BLACKBURN, Missionary to the Cherokees, to the Chairman of the Committee of Missions, dated April 24, 1805.

I HAVE just returned from my Highwassee Indian School. All things go on well. We have now twenty-two scholars; all neatly clothed, very subject to discipline, and learning as well as can be expected. The Indians are getting more and more in love with the design, and as many as possibly can, still come to see me when I go down. The time is carefully improved to give them useful ideas of a civil or religious nature. They are remarkably fond of singing: this is practised in the intervals of conversation, and has great effect. The little scholars are able to sing several hymns by memory, especially the 509th, of Rippon's Selection. Oh! Sir, to hear the little savages singing the praises of Jesus would seem to place you in the border of the assembly of songsters collected from every kindred, language, and nation, and afford a delightful presage of the accomplishment of the promise of the gentiles becoming the inheritance of the Redeemer.

I have in my hands a little above $150 first cost in books belonging to Mr. Woodward: they are nearly such as would be very serviceable to give to the Indian scholars when they should be ready to leave school. Some of them would be well laid out in supplying some poor families who are settled on the frontiers, and are not able to purchase, and are become extremely anxious to read or hear something about Salvation. Should a few wealthy gentlemen compensate Mr. Woodward for them, I should gladly be the organ of their distribution. Presents made to the young Indians are kept very sacred: books therefore of this kind would keep up not only a sense of the obligations they are under, but a relish for reading, and a savour of religion.

The prospects of a future day opening the Gospel fully on this nation are apparent. The attention of the Indians to the exhortations frequently given, their beginning to move out into farms, their adopting civilized customs and habits, &c. but especially the ground to hope that before long their own children will be able (and I hope willing) to preach Jesus, lead to this expectation. This hope is founded on this circumstance: on the morning I last left the school the two most forward boys, whom I use as interpreters, were bathed in tears under a sense of their sin; the same emotion has been observed at other times, during morning, and evening service. Should they get religion they will be qualified to have easy access to the consciences of their friends. May propitious Heaven speedily hasten the joyful event!

I conceived it would be rather unfavourable to our design to see you this spring, and perform the labour of love (the preaching a Missionary sermon) which you requested. Nothing would be more pleasing to my soul than to throw in my poor mite to the treasury of the Lord. Could the impression made on my own mind by the iron grip of experience be pourtrayed before the benevolent minds of the pious in your city, the strongest lock of their desk would be insufficient to secure their cash. An immortal covered with filth, sunk in ignorance, buried in savage ferocity, attended by the female doomed to perpetual drudgery and the servile chain, a train of embryo angels around her feet, capable of eternal pleasure, but chained down to misery for want of a few of the dollars wantonly lavished on frippery and pomp, is a sight which would move the callous heart of a stoic.

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From the same to the same.

May 6th, 1805.

Should providence spare me and give success to my exertions, I will try to see you at the next general Assembly: in the mean time you shall hear from me as often as any thing material occurs, and opportunity will permit.

The Lord is still riding in triumph, breaking down unnecessary partitions; comforting, strengthening and confirming his children; bowing, bending and breaking his enemies. Christ crucified is the theme from the pulpit. To have the sinner stripped of his pleas, and prostrated in the dust in unconditional submission, and Christ, as the author of free salvation seated on the throne, appears to be the ardent desire of the watchmen on the walls of Zion. A spirit of grace and supplication increases.

The first shock being over, enemies are showing themselves; but blessed be God, they as yet can do but very little damage; they can only show their teeth.

Extracts from the Missionary Journals, read before the General Assembly at their late Session.

[Continued from page 362.]

Albemarle Co. Virg. Jan. 14, 1805.

Rev. and dear Sir,

I SAT out the 10th of November, and was from home four weeks, in which time I rode four hundred miles, and preached six and twenty times through the counties of Augusta, Rockingham, Hardy, Pendleton, and Bath. In Augusta and Rockingham there are some vacancies, and a number of destitute places where there appears some hopes of usefulness. But my labours were chiefly in the three latter counties, where there is not a Presbyterian minister settled. I struck the waters of the Potowmac at Moorfield, (Hardy County) a little town surrounded with a very opulent settlement, with but little appearance of practical religion. The people however give a serious attention to preaching; are generally attached to the Presbyterian cause, and could they have the gospel faithfully preached, I should hope a church might be formed. The Rev. Moses Hoge once had a small congregation here, but by removals and deaths there are but very few members of the church remaining. From this place I preached every eight or ten miles to the head of Potowmac (through Hardy and Pendleton) the distance of sixty miles, with very hopeful appearances. The people were attentive and solemn, and in a number of instances deeply impressed. Silent tears were frequently flowing among a people who have heretofore been wholly inattentive, & indeed almost wholly uninstructed in the truths of religion. I regretted very much that I could not spend more time with them: but my appointments being made I was forced to leave them, and crossed the Alleghany mountain to the head of Greenbriar river, where a revival of religion, (of which you have, no doubt, heard) took place last winter and has been progressing ever since. Here among a people who, twelve months past were, in civilization and religious infor-

mation, but one remove from savage life, I was happy to discover the most genuine marks of the power of true godliness. This work has extended about sixty miles. It is a thin settled country. However they have in the last summer organized two churches, and admitted upwards of one hundred members. A great number have also joined other societies, owing I believe chiefly to the want of a Presbyterian ministry among them. This work commenced without the preaching of the gospel, and has progressed with a very scanty supply. I spent here eight days, preaching every day, and conversing freely with the people when I was not preaching, as well to inform myself of the nature and circumstances of the work, as to benefit the people. I found them much better instructed in doctrinal truth than I could have expected. They appeared to me to have just conceptions of all the leading doctrines of the gospel, and to be farther removed, than I believe young converts frequently are from those sentiments which tend to foster the pride of self-sufficiency. This is the more to be admired, as they were previously uninstructed, had not, in our opinion, much preaching of that kind which brings these gospel truths clearly to view, and were very much mixed with a society, whose sentiments, in our opinion, have a tendency, at least to darken some of the most essential and delightful truths of the gospel. And, together with this knowledge, they manifest a zeal to which in the same degree I had been a stranger. I have said nothing of the strange phenomena which are connected in many cases with their religious exercises. I have not mentioned them with the evidences of religion, because I do not consider them as any evidence, neither do the subjects of them as far as I could discover. Bodily exercises in a great variety of forms are common among them. But I shall not attempt a description, because I am persuaded it would baffle the most descriptive pen to give any thing like a true idea of them. I could give you the names, by which the different bodily exercises are designated; but, for the most part, these names convey wrong ideas to those who have never seen them. I will just observe, that in most cases they are obviously involuntary and, to me, clearly supernatural. They sometimes appear to be brought on by strong exercises of mind, whether they be of a happy or distressing nature: but not unfrequently the subjects of them are unconscious of any extraordinary mental exercise. In Greenbriar, the first subjects of these strange exercises were two firm and steady professors of religion, men of firm nervous systems, and one of them at least of a very strong mind. These strange appearances have crossed the Alleghany and seem to be progressing pretty fast eastward. Religious characters appear most subject to them; however, they are no respecters of persons. Those who are affected in this way, if they are not humbled are deeply mortified. On the head of Potowmac, a few days before I was there, at a projected ball, the fiddler had his fiddle jerked out of his hands, he himself, and four of the dancers on the floor, became unwilling subjects of these strange bodily exercises. It was at the moment of commencing their sportive exercise, which was immediately exchanged for one of a very different nature. There are many bold conjectures by those who have never seen these things, respecting the cause, but those who have observed much of them, choose to be pretty cautious. For my own part, I believe the light of eternity will alone shew why it is, the Sovereign of the universe causes or permits these things.

That the Lord may prosper your labours, and grant you every blessing is the prayer of your fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ.

JAMES ROBINSON.

Rev. Dr. Ashbel Green, Chairman of the Standing Committee of Missions.

THE General Assembly, in consequence of a suggestion made by the Committee of Missions,

Resolved, That the members of the Committee of Missions resident in or near the city of Philadelphia, be increased to ten, and that one other member be added from each Synod, making in the whole seventeen. An election was then held, and the following persons chosen and appointed to form the Committee of Missions for the ensuing year, viz.

In Philadelphia and its vicinity. The Rev. Drs. Samuel Blair and Ashbel Green; the Rev. Messrs. Philip Milledoler, Jacob J. Janeway, and George Potts: Dr. Elias Boudinot; Messrs. John Connelly, Robert Smith, Ebenezer Hazard, and William Haslett.

Of the Synod of Albany. The Rev. Jonas Coe.

Of the Synod of New-York & New-Jersey. The Rev. Dr. Alexander M'Whorter.

Of the Synod of Philadelphia. The Rev. Dr. Robert Davidson.

Of the Synod of Pittsburgh. The Rev. James Hughes.

Of the Synod of Virginia. The Rev. George Baxter.

Of the Synod of Kentucky. The Rev. James Blythe, and

Of the Synod of the Carolinas. The Rev. William C. Davis.

THE publication of "The Panoplist, or, the Christian's Armory," has been commenced at Charlestown in Massachusetts, and the first number has been received in this city.

In their preface, the Editors declare their object to be "to promote general happiness; to do good to the souls of their fellow men; and in order to this, to enlighten their minds with useful knowledge; to explain the doctrines, and to recommend and enforce the precepts of the gospel; to exhibit sober and corrrect views of undefiled religion, to take the veil from the eyes of prejudice; to soften the rancour of party spirit; to disturb the security of guilt; to administer encouragement to the penitent, and comfort to the afflicted."

It will be "among their primary objects to collect, condense, and disseminate the latest and best intelligence of the state and progress of religion throughout the world;" and, for the accomplishment of their objects, their plan includes "dissertations and essays on the doctrines and duties of christianity, biblical criticisms, biographical memoirs, moral and religious anecdotes, poetry, such views of ancient and modern literature, history and geography, as are adapted to confirm the truth, and illustrate the meaning of the sacred Scriptures."

A work instituted with such views, and upon so comprehensive a plan, cannot fail of being both useful and entertaining, if supported by such talents as may reasonably be expected in the present case, and conducted with that candour and impartiality, that desire to discover and support evangelical truth, and that disinterestedness in other respects, which the conductors profess, and of which their first number affords a specimen.

*** Any profits which may arise from this work are devoted to Missionary purposes and other pious uses.

POETRY.

SONNET TO FANCY.

Written on contemplating a picturesque scene of nature.

SPIRIT of airy Hope and rapt'rous lay!
I woo thee, Fancy, from the mantled skies;
Whether thou glidest on the moon's pale ray,
Or dipp'st thy pinions in the rainbow's dyes;

Or whether, borne upon the skirting cloud,
At setting sun thou light'st poetic fire;
O come;—and raise a heart by sorrow bow'd,
Nor let thy plastic ray in grief expire.

O come,—and elevate the kindling strain,
From earth's corroding cares to soar above;
Snatch the fair images from virtue's fane
Which truth will sanctify, and Heaven approve;

For these shall charm, though youth's dear scenes are o'er,
And all her fondest hopes exist no more.

P.

From the accounts of the Baptist Missionary Society.

January 3d, 1804, The Missionaries, set apart in aid of the brethren at Serampore, sailed from Bristol. About thirty friends, some in coaches, and others on foot, attended them as far as they could. At Hungroad, after going on board the ship, they returned to the inn and breakfasted. Having a little time, they sang part of the 430th hymn of Rippon's Selection, composed by Mr. Ward of Margate. Dr. Ryland then engaged in prayer; after which they sang the remainder of the hymn. The ship now moving down the river, the Missionaries went on board. As they sailed towards Lamplighter's hall, the company sang the second farewell hymn composed by Mrs. Saffery. All seemed to discover a proper spirit; a mixture of painful grateful affection, and ardent zeal. The parting scene was exquisitely tender.

The hymns are here presented in the order in which they were sang.

HYMNS

Sung at the designation of the Missionaries.

FAREWELL TO THE MISSIONARIES.

From Indian plains, on Albion's shore
See gold, and gems, and fragrance smile;
But Britain, in a richer store,
Returns it from our native isle.

Lo! with the gospel's glorious prize,
With truths irradiant as the sun,
In vain the sparkling treasure vies;
We send the pearl of price unknown.

The nations feel the pangs of war,
And wrath with boundless tumult reigns;
And Gallic fury raves from far,
And British heroes fill the plains:

But Zion's gentler hosts engage,
Impatient for a nobler fight,
Through every land the war to wage,
And put confederate worlds to flight.

Yes, hell shall mourn th' eternal loss,
And earth with captive souls abound;
Before the soldiers of the cross,
With unensanguined laurels crown'd.

For this, th' embosom'd prize we spare,
Dear to the churches' glowing heart;
For this with unreluctant tear,
We bid our well-belov'd depart.

Go, then, dear missionary train,
Go, bless the distant eastern shore;
Ye shall not hear our lips complain,
That we behold your forms no more.

Great God of nature! to whose sight,
Unfathom'd ocean open lies!
Bid every blessing on them 'light,
In prosp'rous gales, and peaceful skies.

Ah! let them not to death be hurl'd,
But guide them o'er the buoyant wave;
Save them thyself—and teach the world
By them, thy power, thy will to save.

S.

THE MISSIONARIES' FAREWELL.

Kindred, and friends, and native land,
How, shall we say farewell?
How, when our swelling sails expand,
How will our bosoms swell!

Yes, nature, all thy soft delights,
And tender ties we know,
But love more strong than death, unites
To Him that bids us go.

Thus, when our every passion mov'd,
The gushing tear-drop starts;
The cause of Jesus, more belov'd,
Shall glow within our hearts.

The sighs we breathe for precious souls,
Where he is yet unknown,
Might waft us to the distant poles,
Or to the burning zone.

With the warm wish our bosoms swell,
Our glowing powers expand;
Farewell, then we can say, farewell!
Our friends, our native land!

S.

The following by a Bristol student.

Sovereign of worlds! display thy pow'r
Be this thy Zion's favour'd hour;
Bid the bright morning star arise,
And point the nations to the skies.

Set up thy throne where satan reigns,
On Afric's shores, on India's plains;
On wilds and continents unknown—
And be the universe thine own!

Speak—and the world shall hear thy voice;
Speak—and the deserts shall rejoice!
Scatter the shades of moral night;
Let worthless idols flee the light!

Trusting in him, dear brethren rear,
The gospel standard void of fear:
Go seek with joy your destin'd shore,
To view your native land no more.

Yes—Christian heroes!—go—proclaim
Salvation through Immanuel's name;
To India's clime the tidings bear,
And plant the Rose of Sharon there,

He'll shield you with a wall of fire,
With flaming zeal your breasts inspire;
Bid raging winds their fury cease,
And hush the tempests into peace.

And when our labours all are o'er,
Then we shall meet to part no more;
Meet with the blood-bought throng to fall,
And crown our Jesus, Lord of All!

B. H. D.

The Evangelical Intelligencer

REV IAMES SPROAT D. D

Engraved for W P Farrand & Co N° 170 Market Street Philadelphia